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BLUEPRINT

SCHOOLS CLASH IN STUDENT PROTEST

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Acalanes Amnest
Close The School O

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Blueprint Photo/Sophia Maund

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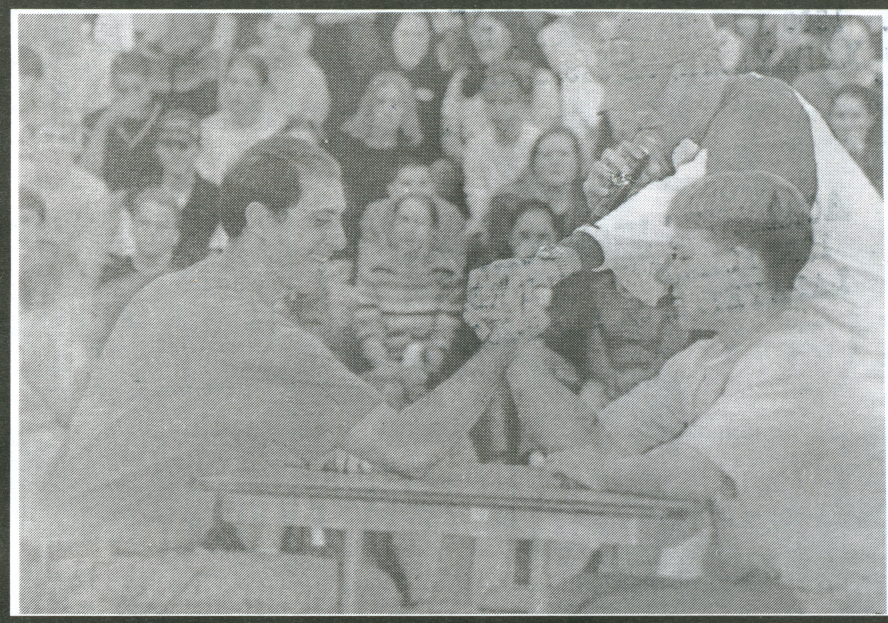
ON THE COVER: At a protest against The School of the Americas, senior Darryl Wong places a cross on a cardboard coffin.

Photo of the Issue



Blueprint Photo/Will McCosker

Teacher Aaron Grumet and junior Matt Seibert "feel the burn" as they battle it out during the Fall Sports Rally.

Blueprint 1999-2000

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Acalanes Blueprint
1200 Pleasant Hill Rd.
Lafayette, CA 94549

Tel: (925) 935-2600 ext. 127

A CALANES BLUEPRINT
NEWS

INSIDE . . . . . .

Cheerleader Class pg.7

STUDENT SMOKING

Choir Students Light Up

By Jason Ahn
Staff Writer

A couple of acapella students decided to smoke cigarettes out in the "cave", the wardrobe room located in the back of the music room, during a substitute-supervised acapella class, according to witnesses, on Nov. 19.

"After they came back out, the whole place reeked of cigarettes," said sophomore acapella member Danny Ebert.

According to one of the smokers, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, he went into the cave because he just wanted a smoke. "I was bored. I had nothing to do.... I didn't want to pack a dip, so I just had a cigarette," said the smoker.

Amidst the chaotic atmosphere of the class the smokers decided to "light up" because of nicotine cravings, the presence of the powerless substitute, who people viewed as "not a real teacher," and to show off their "manliness," according to a classmate who wished to remain anonymous.

Teacher Bruce Lengacher thinks that the impetus for the students to smoke was that "the tradition in past years, that when there's a sub for this class...it's chaos...and it escalated from there."

"When I walked into the class, the whole class was in an uproar, everyone was going crazy, running amuck, and the substitute was going really crazy. She started freaking out; she was sitting there with her eyes closed and her hands over her ears," said Ebert. "This time it kind of got a little out of hand," said junior Jake Nicholson.

However there was more imminent danger in the smoking. "I don't think they realized what danger they were putting there fellow classmates in...the clothes and the robes and the books that are back there are extremely flammable and it's obvious to me that they weren't thinking," said Lengacher. "The two individuals made a very poor choice."

Blueprint Illustration/Victoria Yu

However, one of the smokers said he knew that they could cause a fire, and they "were careful about it and moved all flammable objects to the back of the cave."

According to Ebert, the sub finally decided to leave because she was "pissed off" that nobody was listening to her. The sub called the office after she smelled the smoke, and the campus supervisor Paul Cunningham and Associate Principal Luanne Bruce came to her rescue, and they immediately began to interrogate students about what had happened, according to Nicholson.

"Nobody fessed up," said classmate Jake Nicholson. According to Ebert, they were going to start searching backpacks and smelling breath to detect smokers, but Grace Woods and a couple other people "talked them out of it" and the two administrators decided to let the perpetrators turn themselves in later. According to one of the smokers, they did not turn themselves in and they have not been caught by administration.

Bruce refused to comment on the issue and Paul Cunningham said that he has not been authorized by the vice principal to speak about this issue.

Lengacher said he respects the fact that they made a mistake and hopes that they learn from that bad choice. He added, "what happened will not happen again."

However the whole class suffered consequences in lieu of this incident: Lengacher took away practice time to help students learn pieces for the musical auditions. "I had allotted time to work on the music for auditions but...we needed to spend the time I had allotted in order to write the letters of apology to the substitute," said Lenganchcer.

Nicholson added, "now all the choir robes smell like smoke."

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Calendar Scheduling Carves Vacation Time

By Jenny Jun
Staff Writer

Like a turkey without the trimmings, Acalanes students were not stuffed full of joy when their Thanksgiving break was cut to a drumstick, down from nine days last year to five this year.

For the past two years, Thanksgiving week has been like the fourteen pound turkey of vacations, not too big, and not too small, but just enough for Acalanes Union High School District students to savor the taste of a much needed vacation, with teacher in-service days on Monday and Tuesday of that week. This year, the holiday started on Wednesday for both teachers and students.

Sixty-one students were absent on Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week, compared to the average of thirty-four on regular school days. "I expected there to be more absences because of our elementary schools being out the whole week, but the actual absences were not as high as I expected," said Attendance Secretary Janet Klemmedson. Klemmedson thought families who had already made plans would go ahead and leave, while "those who hadn't finalized their plans probably didn't leave before that Wednesday."

The school district is funded by student attendance rates, the Average Daily Attendance (ADA), over the course of the school year. "One ADA is one student attending school for all 180 days," said District Director of Fiscal Services John Frick. According to Frick, the district receives about $25.51 for each day a student goes to school. Absences for other district high schools were higher than Acalanes' with Campolindo having 72, Las Lomas with 110, and Miramonte having about 90.

AHS lost about $3,000 in ADA revenues. "It wasn't necessarily a huge dent in it of itself. On the other hand, any time we can receive the extra money can make a difference in discretionary areas," said Principal Keith Schmidt. Schmidt believes the school could have used the lost dollars to buy extra luxuries for the school, like two more iMacs. The district lost an estimated total of about $17,500 due to absences among all the high schools.

While Acalanes students attended school at the beginning of Thanksgiving week, the neighboring elementary districts (NEDS) that feed into Acalanes, had a week of vacation. Two years ago, when AUHSD had the week off, the NEDS decided to change and be synchronized with the high schools. "As it turned out, our staff and parents very positively received taking the entire week off. Since high school is more difficult to miss, it would be easier for parents to pull kids out of elementary school and instead of losing too much ADA funding, we opted for a week long break," said Lafayette School Board member Mary McCosker.

However, when the high school district switched to a five day holiday this year, the NEDS chose to keep the one week break. AUHSD schools could have kept in-service days in place, since it was permitted by California Education Laws, but instead had them before school started. "The needs of both districts are different, and even though they'll never have the exact same calendar, it would be nicer if they had the same holidays," said McCosker. Teacher in-service days were kept on Monday and Tuesday by the NEDS.

The AUHSD calendar committee planned a week-long vacation time two years ago to give families time to visit colleges without students having to miss school. "When the district surveyed and found that not many students were touring colleges or the colleges were closed, we decided to go back to the standard form," said Dr. Johanna VanderMolen, Associate Superintendent and head of the 1999-2000 committee.

Despite district findings on the lack of college visits during vacation, parent Lynn Lopez "probably would've taken Melaine (her daughter) to visit colleges if Acalanes had the whole week off." While many parents kept their kids in school, Bonnie Brown decided to pull her two students out that week. "Although having my kids miss school wasn't my first choice, two days of missed school was better than missing our annual Thanksgiving family gathering," she said.

"The calendar is developed to maximize student achievement and to provide professional development for teachers without negatively taking away from the students' instructional time," said VanderMolen. After the calendar committee and Teachers' Association representatives collaborate and propose a schedule for the school year, it is submitted to the body of teachers to vote. If passed by the teachers and approved by the governing board, the calendar is set for the following school year.

Some teachers, expecting many students to be out, planned "easier days (Monday and Tuesday) because people tend to space out since they are looking forward to vacation," said teacher Julie Haire. If parents did not call students out sick, the student would receive a "U" for unexcused. Unexcused is input into the computer for all absences other than illness. A memo was distributed to teachers ahead of time and it was at the teacher's discretion to give homework before or after the break, so students would not be penalized. New Independent Study Policies (ISP) say students must be gone at least five days, so students could not get ISP forms for Thanksgiving week.

"Vacation is supposed to a family time where you spend time with relatives and shouldn't have to worry about school," said Jenna Brown. Brown said her teachers did not plan on giving much work, but "when (she) came to school Monday, (she) had a big load of homework."

Even future Acalanes students had concerns about the Thanksgiving vacation. "Next year, I think it would be a lot easier if everyone (all districts) had the whole week off because then families who might not go on vacation because of school would be able to go without kids not having to missing school," said eighth-grader Shauna Kennedy. At this point, the calendar committee has met twice and is still in the planning process. "We have not discussed that (2000-2001 Thanksgiving break) at this point in time. Anything is a consideration right now," said Dr. Beverly Sadler, Assistant Superintendent and current head of the calendar committee. Sadler hopes to have next year's calendar approved by late January.

MILLENNIUM BUG

Y2K Won't Make School Go Away

By Kevin Medeiros and Danny Ebert
Staff Writers

In the past few months there have been about a million different rumors about the Y2K bug, but life on campus will continue to go on after the clock strikes midnight on Jan. 1, 2000.

Even if every computer at Acalanes crashes we will still have classes because "school can continue without computers," said District Network Manager Tracy Dennis.

School will still start on Monday morning Jan. 3 unless the school doesn't have running water or power flowing through our lights says Dennis.

There may be a few problems with the systems come 7 o'clock Monday morning when faculty members start turning on their computers, but most major problems will be avoided because "we standardized all of our software, we standardized our PC's on Windows 98... and the Macs on OS 8.6," said Dennis.

Y2K is not a virus; it is an error caused by the way a computer reads dates. Most computers only read the last two digits for the programmed year; they cannot input a change in the first two. In other words, the pre-programmed "19" is already in the computer and will not change to "20" when the ball drops.

Throughout the past year the school has been trying to prepare for Y2K but the problem is that no one knows for sure what really will happen when 2000 comes along. It may be just an error message at the boot-up screen or all of our computers may not even turn on.

Although the software is Y2K compliant, it doesn't mean all problems will be avoided. Microsoft Online warned, "Don't assume that because your hardware is Year 2000 compliant that your operating or network operating systems are also compliant."

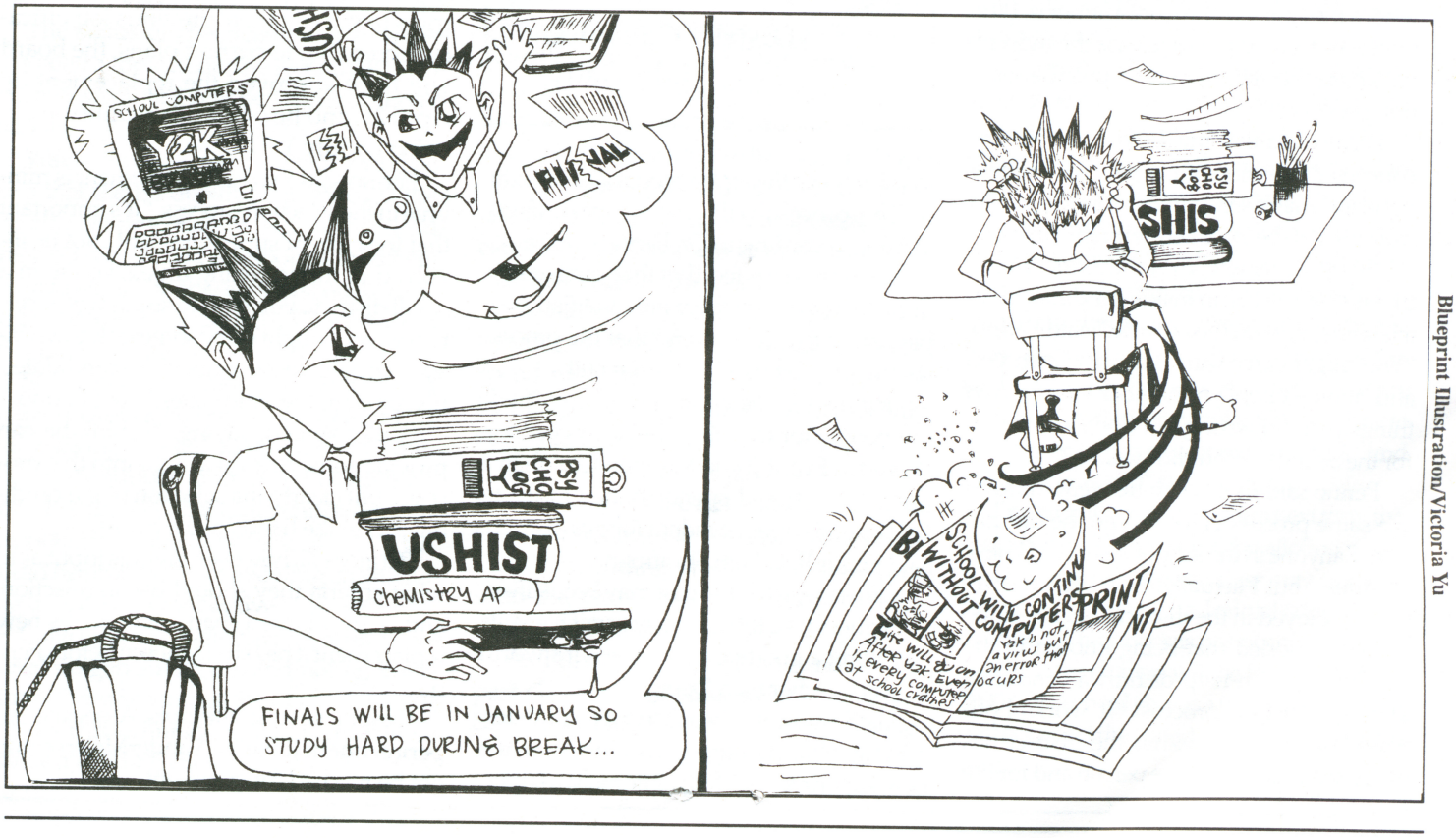
Students and teachers in general will most likely not even be able to notice the problems that occur if any occur at all. The only way a student might notice is that a date is wrong on his paper or on a spreadsheet according to Dennis.

Although many corporations are very concerned about the possible consequences of the Y2K bug most students are not. "I don't think Y2K is as serious as it is made out to be, I don't think it will affect our lives much," said sophomore Brett Woodruff.

The reason most students are not worried is because they view it as a problem that will just go away after the year 2000. Also long after Jan. 1, they will still be dealing with the continual homework and massive amounts of studying for their upcoming final exams.

However, the year 2000 is steadily approaching and there are a few students who are a bit worried.

Until that time though most of us will just have to sit back and wait for the clock to strike 8:00 am to see what happens.



Blueprint Illustration/Victoria Yu

NEW SUPERINTENDENT

Search Fuels Speculation on Inside Choice

By Kevin Medeiros and Nathalie de Leon
Staff Writer and News Editor

Amidst speculation that a prospect has already been chosen, the district has begun an extensive search for a new superintendent to replace Dr. James Perino, who will retire in June.

There have been many rumors among faculty and staff that the district has already chosen the next superintendent and that they are just going through the motions. "I think that they district already has ----- in mind and that they will stick with that unless a spectacular candidate comes along," said one teacher.

School Board member Bill Jasper responded, "I wish (the teachers) would tell me. I don't know who we'll pick."

Personnel Director Dr. Beverly Sadler said the rumors are false. "I would say that that is absolutely untrue," said Sadler. "I think this is a very open process."

One teacher responded, "Even though the district says it is an open process that doesn't mean that it actually is."

Although the teachers have indicated whom they believe the front-runner is, *Blueprint* has decided not to release the individual's name because it may impair the selection process.

Perino said that the district had no preconceived selection of the new superintendent and that it sometimes works against a candidate to be affiliated with the district.

"In my experience over the years... I think that it's harder on an inside candidate than it is somebody on the outside," said Perino. "You might carry some baggage with you and maybe people remember you for two things you did wrong but don't know you for the 50 things you did well."

Perino said that when he went through the same process 11 years ago, he did not know anyone in the school district. "I knew the area... but I actually didn't know anyone employed in the district," said Perino.

Sadler added that being known in the community can help or hurt a candidate during selection process. "It works both ways. Being from within the district has many advantages for the person and for the district because it has some built-in continuity for the district.... (But) it's hard to find anyone in a high profile position who hasn't made some decision somewhere along the line that some people agreed with and some people didn't.... It's a double-edged sword," said Sadler.

Rudy Gatti, a search consultant hired by the district, said that it is apparent that the district is using an open process because it hired him to hold hearings with community members to decide what qualifications to look for. He also said, however, that if the district wanted to forego the process and hire someone, or if it had a pre-chosen candidate in mind, it would be to the district's benefit.

"I usually tell them that if they think they have somebody aboard that they like they should go ahead and hire that person instead of going through a process," said Gatti.

> "I usually tell them that if they think they have somebody aboard that they like they should go ahead and hire that person instead of going through a process."
>
> **-District Consultant Rudy Gatti**

The process will cost approximately $10,000, according to Dr. Perino's office.

Some students feel that the search cost is unnecessary when there are qualified people within the district, and that the process should only be used as a last result.

"It think that if there are prospects of finding people for the job in the district... they should.... But if it's just impossible, then I think they should spend money to try to find a good superintendent for our district," said junior Elizabeth Shrafman.

Others feel that the cost may be justified.

"I guess it's a lot of money, but if it results in getting a good person I guess it's worth it," said teacher Stan Oberg.

Gatti said that the district is still determining what characteristics it wants in the new superintendent. Traditionally, a superintendent should be able to communicate effectively, plan, direct staff, hire the right kind of people keep the district budget stable, and have a good feel for what the community wants, he said.

He is looking for "people who are...ready for superintendency, ready to handle a district like Acalanes. It's a pretty high-powered district...pretty high clientele."

The district and Gatti are currently developing a profile of the superintendent the community wants through meetings with various groups such as students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders.

An open meeting is scheduled for Acalanes students on Monday, Dec. 13 at 7 a.m. in room 105. Parents are welcome to come at 7:30 p.m. in the cafeteria.

According to the projected schedule, while selecting criteria, the district advertises the position in educators' publications. The district, school board, advisory committee, and consultant then review the applications and choose a group of candidates to interview. They then choose a few finalists and hold more extensive interviews, and visit their respective districts to survey their previous job efficacy. According to current plans, the board will have approved the replacement by April 25, and he/she will assume the position by July 1.

Perino said that his involvement is minimal in the selection process. "It's important that the current superintendent...not be involved in the screening unless you're in a small district...you tend to see things in certain ways. I might carry some unknown biases; I might know some of the candidates. It's unfair to the candidates," said Perino.

Sadler agreed, saying, "I think he can provide some helpful insight into this process... but clearly the selection of the candidates is in the hands of the board."

Perino will, however, give his input as to what criteria they should use in selection, and he may have a chance to train the new replacement if he/she is chosen before Perino's retirement.

Despite several attempts, Associate Superintendent Johanna VanderMolen could not be reached for comment.

CHEERLEADING CLASS

Cheer Squad Campaigns for Elective

Damon Diederich
Staff Writer

After cheering themselves on for their own cause, the Acalanes cheerleaders and their advisor Lyenne Denny have succeeded in getting their activity recognized as a Leadership pilot class for next year, which will be supervised by an administrator.

There were three possible proposals for giving course credit to cheerleaders, one being a PE elective or a situation where cheerleaders could sign out of PE for cheerleading, the other a separate leadership class. Of these two, Leadership was chosen by the administration, the PE department and the cheerleading advisor as the more agreeable solution because it allowed the girls to be together without having to be a PE class in the inconvenient 7th period slot.

Cheerleaders in all other schools around the district receive either PE or Leadership credit and proponents of cheerleading at Acalanes were glad to get similar benefits for cheerleaders here. While this year's senior cheerleaders will not get the benefits of the new class, they were glad to see a class be formed and happy for their younger comrades. "I think it is definitely a good thing," said Varsity cheerleader Jessica Reid.

The status of cheerleading at Acalanes has been a topic of debate recently, spawning many spirited yells between concerned parties.

Wayne Smaker, the PE department chair, said that the PE department opposed two PE elective proposals by which cheerleading would be treated as a sport so that cheerleaders would be able to option out or making cheerleading a separate PE elective for cheerleaders only.

Smaker cited problems in the past: "On a few occasions before, we had cheerleaders walking around unsupervised when they were supposed to be with their advisor." He also said that California's stringent restrictions on the definition of a PE class could be prohibitive of allowing cheerleading to become a PE elective.

California law states that PE must be focused on general fitness and not on a specific activity, i.e. not just football or baseball, etc. By this definition, cheerleading might not be a valid PE class.

Blueprint Photo/ Joanna Dahlhauser

Acalanes cheerleaders cheer their hearts out at every rally and all they ask for is respect.

Smaker said that the department also felt that leadership credit for the cheerleaders would be more beneficial than PE credit, as it appears better on a college transcript.

Denny believes that making cheerleading a leadership class will be beneficial to the cheerleaders, by expanding their personal leadership responsibilities beyond just their cheering. "I feel really excited about the prospect of having a class period when all of the cheerleaders can be together," said Denny, "During normal after-school practice the girls are all split into groups, but a class would allow them to be together and establish a bond. This is important to bring the squad together and will be especially valuable so that the JV cheerleaders can spend more time with the varsity girls so that they can learn from them things only experience teaches."

JV cheerleader Christina Williams was concerned about the fact that a class would take up a valuable elective slot. "That means that cheerleading would take away one space that we need or want for another elective," said Williams.

As Principal Keith Schmidt noted, the past cheerleading class was canceled because past cheerleaders felt it was too restrictive of their schedules.

JV cheerleader Lauren Schubert echoed Schmidt, saying, "Cheerleaders should get Leadership credit instead of PE credit because Leadership credit is more valuable (on a transcript) and because cheerleaders could simply take a PE class as well as the cheerleading class."

According to Schmidt, the new class will have to be assigned to an administrator because the average teacher contract will not allow them to teach all of the cheerleaders (since there are more than thirty cheerleaders total) and because Acalanes has no money to pay for the Leadership II class to become a full section as normal classes are. "Figuring that a full time teacher is five of those sections (that we have), the question is: do we have the wherewithal as we are currently staffed or supplied by sections to devote one of those sections to this task...and the answer is no," said Schmidt.

Pending its overall success next year, the Leadership II class could be allotted a section to become a regular class, stay as a special class under an administrator, or be dropped if feedback is not positive.

The new change will be in effect for the 2000-2001 school year as a pilot program and will not affect the cheerleading program this year.

NUGGETS

Acalanes Gas Station Up In Air

By Blake Koelmel
Staff Writer

Along with the "potentially harmful" fumes released from the demolition of the Acalanes Gas Station located at the northwestern corner of the Deer Hill Road and Pleasant Hill Road intersection, clouds of confusion have formed over the possibilities of what will be constructed in its place.

Rumors of an In and Out Burger or a Gap clothing store being erected there have diffused through the student body, but according to both the city of Lafayette and the owner, there are no definite plans as of now.

"The station was demolished at the request of the city of Lafayette," said Anthony Lagiss, the owner of the property. "We have no definite plans at the moment for anything."

The gas station, torn down due to failure in meeting regulations, is located in a zone where the construction of restaurants, cafes, retail sales, and drug stores is prohibited. Institutions such as churches, multiple-family buildings, publicly-owned buildings, community buildings, or clubs, however, would be sanctioned by the city.

"For that area, there is a specific designated zoning district which happens to be dedicated for offices," said Lafayette Assistant Planner Jenny Soo. "A person could conceivably argue that In and Out Burger is a fast food place and not a restaurant but I don't know whether or not the commission would agree."

Senior Ryan Stapleton feels that office buildings there would be a waste of prime location property and that something more useable by the students of Acalanes would be preferable.

"Office buildings are boring," said Stapleton. "If I had it my way, I'd put a club there for teens or pave it over so we can use it as a parking lot."

Lagiss expressed no preference as to what the lot is used for and feels that he is really at the mercy of the city .

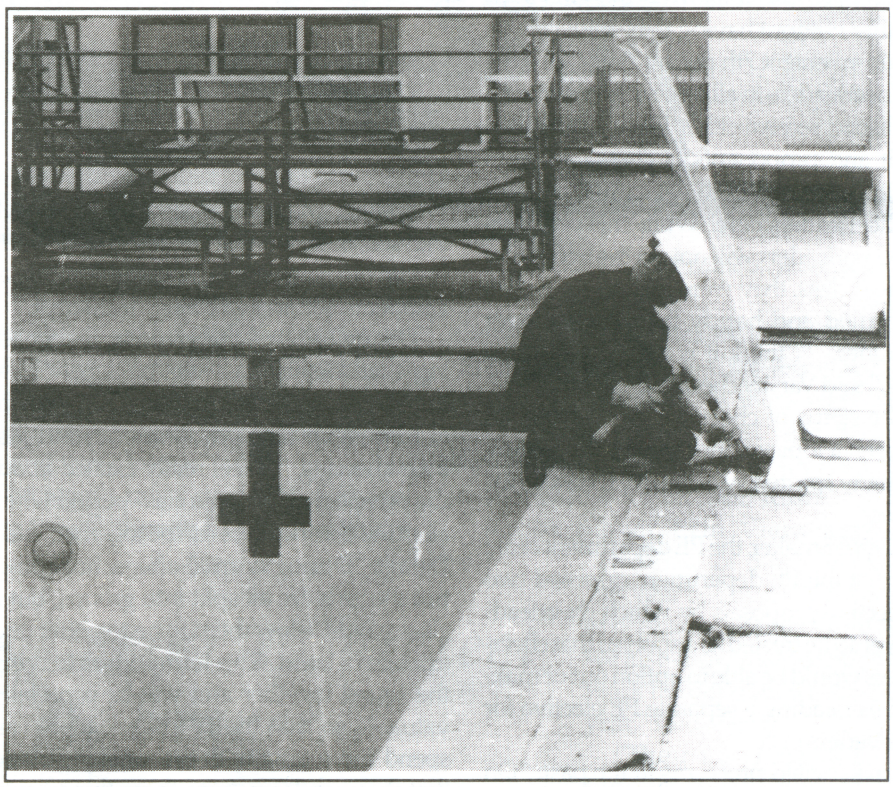
"I've had a lot of calls and everybody has ideas but the city has to approve it," said Lagiss. "Basically, we are not through with final approvals and everything is still up in the air."

SMOKE-OUT

By Chris Kim
Staff Writer

The Great American smoke out held on Oct. 18 was a day for smokers all over America to quit for one day. In an effort to make students more aware of the day and the hazardous effects of smoking, Nurse Diana Nehls prepared a series of videos and other materials for teachers to use. The materials included various videos as well as props including mock lungs in several stages of smoking, as well as a giant cigarette representing tobacco consumed by a person in a week. "About 12-15 teachers participated, which means several hundred students participated," said Nurse Nehls. "I think it was a success."

DRY POOL



Blueprint Photo/ Sophia Maund

Don't take the plunge...

The Acalanes swimming pool once was filled with water, splashing waterpolo players and teeth gritting medley relay swimmers is now only a pavement pit. The pool will stay in a drought phase as the cement, diving board and drainage system will be torn out as part of Acalanes ongoing reconstruction.

Assistant Principal, Ms. Luanne Bruce hopes the project will be finished by spring, however she said "no completion date is currently scheduled". Jill Ramsay, the Acalanes District Secretary of Business, said $1.4 million from the Measure A bond is allocated for the new pool. Anyone interested in the new pool can find updates and construction plans through the Acalanes District website.

Until the pool is finished, all aqua-loving Dons will have to splash, dive and practice their flip turns elsewhere if they want to keep up with Campolindo swimmers. Campolindo's Soda Aquatics Center has already been completed after a $3 million charity donation which allowed for an Olympic-size competition pool, a diving board, a lap pool, men's and women's dressing rooms, and a concession stand. The Dons Swim team will have to dive in into the new season and pool ready to compete in a new atmosphere at both home and away meets.

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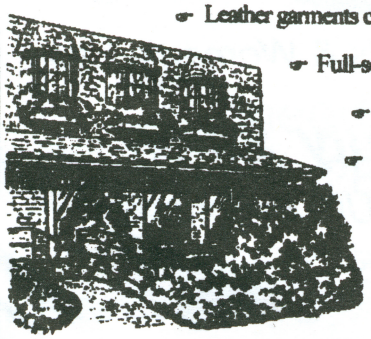

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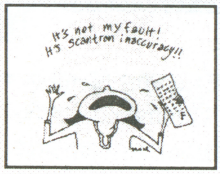

Scantron Accuracy pg 11

AMNESTY RALLY

Local Teens Go the Extra Mile(s)

Amnesty International Protests Schools of America

By Nick Allen
Staff Writer

Seven Acalanes students stepped across the line of suburban high school life on Sunday, Nov. 21, and joined in a nationally organized protest demanding closure of the U.S. Army's School of the Americas. Six of the seven students, Damon Peters, Lee Gilman, Mary Thomas, Daryl Wong, Zoe Palitz, and Molly Wille protested the School of the Americas and participated in an educational "teach-in" at Todos Santos Park in Concord. Another Acalanes student activist, Chris Eaton, literally and figuratively, went so far as to participate in the central demonstration at Fort Benning, Georgia, where the school is located.

The School of the Americas (SOA), a training center for Latin American and Caribbean military and police officers, has been criticized by various human rights organizations for its many graduates who have been allegedly linked to assassinations, torture, kidnapping, death squads and wholesale human rights abuses. Activists have also protested its reputation as a U.S. Government tool to maintain American dominance in Latin America.

Five Acalanes students, all members of the Acalanes Chapter of Amnesty International, joined a 25 person gathering at Todos Santos Park in Concord on Sunday, Nov. 21. On that very day ten years ago, six Jesuit Priests were slain by Latin American military officials, some of whom were graduates of the School of the Americas. The gathering on Sunday in Concord, which was not so much a protest as a rally supporting the

continued on the next page

ONE STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

By Phil Peyron
Staff Writer

When I first arrived at Todos Santos park in Concord on Sunday, Nov. 21, I was immediately swept into a band of aging hippies and eager young liberals crowded in a tight circle around an enthusiastic speaker who was briefing everyone on the evils of the United States military. "Oh no!" I thought, "The Berkeley loonies have migrated to Concord to whine about another government institution!" At that moment, my eyes began to water and my nose was filled with a horrible stench (No, it wasn't tear gas; this was Concord, not Seattle) as an excited protestor lit up a small bundle of rank incense that looked like a hunk of burning bush, further degrading my already low image of these people.

Although I just wanted to go home and pollute my brain with television, I decided that since I had taken the time to come out already, I might as well listen to what these so called "Freedom Fighters" had to say. Since I was completely ignorant of the topic, I at least wanted to find out why everyone was making such a big deal about whatever it was. After listening to a couple speakers, I heard that the School of Americas is a military training school that trains Latin American soldiers on combat and torture techniques, and that these soldiers were causing all sorts of human rights abuses in Latin American countries using their newly acquired, American funded knowledge.

After watching the presentations of many articulate speakers, I started to soften to their reasoning. It seemed like a worthwhile enough cause, and it sure beat watching *Happy Days* reruns on TV all afternoon; plus I didn't have to suffer through endless skin cream commercials. After listening to a few Acalanes students' presentations, I was almost as eager as the other protesters. Once I noticed that the emcee was concluding the speech part of the rally, I snapped back to my journalist objectivity. I tried to grab an Acalanes student who would be willing to tell me about what he was doing there and why was he doing it, and when I reached one, he thrust a wooden cross with a name on it into my hands. "Take this. We're starting the procession now." In order to finish the interview, I followed him and fell in line with about thirty other cross toting participants trailing behind a group of four men carrying a makeshift coffin. I asked around and found out that we were going to walk around the park in a solemn procession dedicated to innocent people who have died at the hands of School of Americas graduates.

After the procession, we gathered around the coffin for a song and prayer session. I was so caught up in the activities that I forgot about my original goal and joined in. As I left the park, I wondered, "Did I just take part in that?" When I realized that I had, I decided that human rights were a lot more important than what the Fonz would do to the guy who spilled mustard on his jacket.

PROTEST

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supporting the protesters at Fort Benning, intended to ceremonially commemorate the victims of Latin American death squads and military dictators. "Most of us (Acalanes students) couldn't go down to Fort Benning, and there were other large protests in Berkeley and San Francisco, but we felt it was important to have our own community thing," said senior Mary Thomas. "I don't think that the rally necessarily made a difference, but I think it did make people aware (of the issue), which is really what it's all about at the high school level," she said.

Primary speakers John Croft of the Veterans for Peace, and Wes Nicholson of the Mount Diablo Peace Center, along with the five Acalanes students gave informational speeches detailing the history of the SOA and the current state of the struggle to close the school. Zoe Palitz, a junior at Acalanes and prayer leader at the rally, felt that the small protest was successful in its attempt to create awareness within the community. She said, "For those few people who showed up, they know more about the issue, and even those who didn't know anything at all learned something. Now those people can go tell their friends about these horrible things and tell their senators to vote it down."

Sophomore Lee Gilman, who spoke briefly at the rally about alleged atrocities by SOA graduates in El Salvador, commented on his obligation to be involved in activism." The american public should not have to spend their taxes on a military institution which supports corrupt military dictatorships and trains so many human rights abusers," he said. Palitz also felt a strong obligation to be involved in this international issue. " It's a global world we are living in. We can't continue to live pretending that America is the center of the universe. I feel the need to help less fortunate countries because I have the opportunity to, coming from a place like Lafayette where I am sheltered and am supported in what I do," she said.

While the five Acalanes students proudly rallied for the success of the protesters in Georgia on Sunday, one Lafayette teen found himself 1,825 miles from home, and at the heart of the very conflict. Acalanes sophomore Chris Eaton took part in the central protest at Fort Benning, Georgia, where more than 10,000 protesters demanded the closure of the School of the Americas. Eaton was also among a group 5,000 people who "crossed the line," or illegally trespassed onto the School of the Americas private government property in defiance and protest against the SOA. "This angry mob committed one of the largest acts of civil disobedience since the Vietnam War," said Eaton, basing his comment on widespread press reports.

"We crossed the line in groups of five, following a solemn funeral procession at the front of the line. A group that seemed like a catholic choir read out the names of the victims, and then everyone put up their crosses, which had the names of the victims written on them. When the crosses were all raised, everyone chanted the Spanish word *presente*, which means that the spirits of the dead were with us as we crossed the line," he said.

"For those few people who showed up, they know more about the issue, and even those who didn't know anything at all learned something. Now those people can go tell their friends about these horrible things and tell their senators to vote it down."

-Zoe Palitz

A mile onto the School of the Americas's property, the 5,000 protesters were halted by the military police who demanded that the trespassers leave. The military police, as Eaton said, gave the protesters the option of leaving in prearranged shuttles on their own accord, or if they chose to be persistent, they could be "assisted" to the shuttles. Many protesters sat or lied down and refused to move. " Our group left with the shuttles because we had the obligation to go back with them, but many people stayed there. At that point, the military police said that the protesters could go back the way they came or be subject to arrest," said Eaton. The few who stayed were arrested but not prosecuted, while the remaining funeral procession walked backwards the way it had come. Eaton attributed the small amount of arrests made by the military police to the school's fear for bad press.

If it meant the closure of the School of the Americas, Chris Eaton said he would welcome an onslaught of the military police with open arms. Yet being detained and missing a week of the other SOA was not a risk he was willing to take. "I could handle being detained...for a day, and I could handle having my name taken down by the military police, but I wouldn't want to miss a week of school," said Eaton.

Growing up in a politically charged environment, with a mother who was actively involved in politics during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's and a brother who is currently active in politics, Eaton's activism is in part the product of his environment. Eaton admits that his family, especially his older brother Charlie, has had great influence and has supported him in his activism, however, he feels that his brothers influence was simply the foundation for his political involvement. "Charlie was a great inspiration for me. He was the one who first got me interested in activism and left-wing politics. I'm still confident though, that this is me and my beliefs are my own," said Eaton.

Similarly, he admits that, although his involvement in activism is mostly for his dedicated belief in the cause, the element of thrill and adrenaline rush given during a protest is also very attractive to the average teenager. "It was really moving for me when all the people crossed the line with the caskets and began to sing together. People even began to sit down in defiance when the police came," said Eaton.

Eaton, like many others, says that at times he feels insignificant. He jokingly describes himself as Don Quixote, who fights the righteous battle against evil, yet the "enemy" remains unfazed. His faith returns though, as he looks back upon past successes." Sometimes when I feel like I can't make a difference, I look at changes in the past that have been made, and I feel that there is hope to make things better in the future. I see myself working in political issues like the School of the Americas in the future, but I'm not sure whether my profession will be political or not. I do know that as I go further into my higher education I'll learn more about the world of politics, and I'll always stay involved."

SCANTRON ACCURACY

Scantron Inaccuracy Upseting Teachers

By Kristy Mayer
Staff Writer

When students take a Scantron-graded test, they expect accurate results. Yet in the last few months, teachers have been making an increasing number of complaints regarding the accuracy of Scantron machines.

Although Scantrons provide an efficient method for grading multiple choice tests, teachers are discovering that the Scantrons are not always as accurate as they are expected to be. Teachers and students have found that when an answer is erased, the scantron will frequently misinterpret the eraser marks for the selected answer. As a result, student test scores are lowered, and tempers flare.

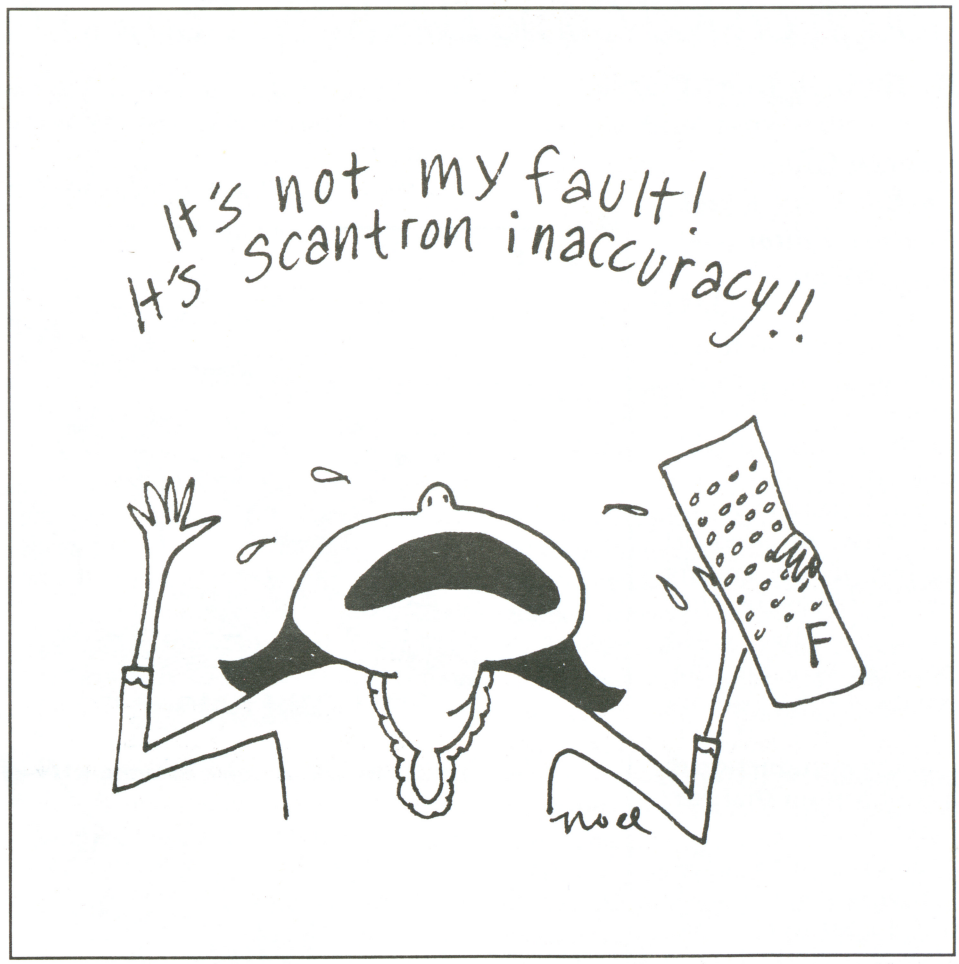
Out of the 18 respondents to a 70-teacher survey sent out by Blueprint, 11 teachers reported that they have experienced problems with the Scantron machine. Most of the teachers feel it is enough of a problem to mandate double-checking of the already graded tests.

Junior Jenny Barbera had a problem with the Scantron machine inaccurately grading her test, marking five correct answers wrong. As a result, her entire grade in the class was lowered substantially. "I could've gotten a (different letter grade) for the quarter," she said.

To compensate for these errors, some teachers are allowing students to check over their papers once they've been corrected to make sure they were graded accurately. Although this is a trust-worthy system, a few students are taking advantage of the opportunity by changing their original answer.

This reliability concern is just one of the factors causing teachers to question the benefit of using Scantrons. It may be easier to slide a sheet through a machine, but if the system is inconsistent, teachers feel a line needs to be drawn. By the time the they go back and check over the Scantron, they find it would have taken less time to simply grade the tests without the use of fancy machines.

Ms. Tina Stanford, a science teacher, is among the teachers who have changed their attitudes about this seemingly foolproof machine. "I'll probably continue to use Scantrons for those main tests, but I don't think I'm going to use them (for other tests) anymore...No, it's not worth it," said Stanford.



Bluerint Illustration/Noel Fahden

Many students echo the same sentiment. Even though the Scantrons allow students to receive their grades sooner, they feel they would rather wait an extra day or two than risk accuracy. "It really bothers me that the Scantrons are so inconsistent," said sophomore Julia Rasooly.

Dave Coleman, Quality Assurance Manager at Scantron, said that for the Scantron machine to incorrectly mark an answer, there must have been some user error. Coleman insists that the machines are sold with an accuracy of 99.9%, and this number will not decrease over time, or with heavy usage.

Blueprint ran several tests on the Scantron machines to check their true accuracy. Fifty Scantron forms were filled out with 50 correct answers each, and out of the 2500 marks graded, the Scantron machine marked 100 of them inaccurately. According to Coleman, a maximum of two and a half answers should have been marked wrong.

Scantron has admitted to a printing problem that caused inaccuracies with the electronic grading system. Coleman sent a memo to several Scantron users, including Acalanes, to alert them to the problem, and it has now been cleared up.

Renate Crocker, a German teacher at Acalanes, who took an active role in dealing with the Scantron Corporation, said, "Now that we know which (forms) to use, there shouldn't be anymore problems."

Yet the faulty forms have been eradicated, and teachers are still experiencing many difficulties.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Rising Tide of Juvenile Crime...Bills, that is

Tough-on-Kid-Crime Bills Keep Coming As Crime Decreases

By Hannah Hens-Piazza, James Sherwood and Lauren Gong
Co-Editor-in-Chief, Feature Editor and Staff Writer

Although 16 and 17 year olds in California cannot smoke, drink, vote, or marry, some of them are now eligible to be tried as adults.

There may be an increasing number of young people ending up in Juvenile Hall next year due to the passage of a bill that makes it easier to lock kids up in California and the introduction of a proposition that furthers this idea.

Senate Bill 334, which will go into effect in January 2000, allows juveniles aged 16 and over to be tried as adults for very serious offenses, such as murder and rape with a weapon, according to The Juvenile Division Manager of Contra Costa County, Joe Davis, and Juvenile Probation Manager Lynn Gotchall.

Senate Bill 334 eliminates the hearing process for juveniles 16 and up, but only for severe crimes.

"Before this bill, the district attorney would have to file a motion with the juvenile court," said Davis. The attorney would have to convince the court that because of the nature of the offense, the juvenile should be tried as an adult. Then a hearing would follow to make the final call.

"We're making a special exception here," said Gotchall. "You can't minimalize the terrible things that some youngsters do."

Gotchall also said the bill takes much of the discretion away from the district attorney in deciding whether or not a minor is to be tried as an adult. The process of holding a hearing to determine how a minor is tried will still apply to cases where the juvenile is under 16 and commits a very serious offense.

Blueprint Illustration/Noel Fahden

According to Lafayette police officer Lawrence Seliga, the crimes most common in Lafayette would not be affected by the new law. He said the majority of juvenile offenses in Lafayette involve vandalism, drug use, possession of alcohol or marijuana, and theft such as shoplifting. Though he supports a crack-down on juvenile crime, Seliga also said, "I think each case has to be looked at individually."

Principal Keith Schmidt agreed, saying that each case involving a juvenile should be examined carefully and individually. He said there is often interpretation involved in legislation. "What is a weapon?" he asked.

Schmidt said he has mixed feelings about the new legislation. "Most people would agree that by age 16, a young person is aware of the difference between right and wrong," said Schmidt.

There is speculation regarding the motivation behind the writing of the Senate Bill 334. American Civil Liberties Union spokesperson Nancy Otto said that juvenile crime has

JUVENILE JUSTICE

actually been decreasing nationwide over the last eight years. This statistic was confimed by Gotchall. When asked about the motivation behind the bill, Legislative Director Mike Robeson said, "That's not an easy question."

According to Otto, the roots of the juvenile justice system are actually in rehabilitation. The juvenile justice system was not intended to be such a punitive program. Less and less funds are being given to rehabilitation and education programs. "This bill is a very dangerous bill," said Otto. "Studies show that if you have a set amount of money, there are more results with rehabilitation programs than there are with locking kids up."

Otto also pointed out that it can be very difficult for a person to return to society after spending time in Juvenile Hall. "After being in a dehumanizing situation like that, a person cannot rejoin society very easily," she said. Many minors will return to crime after serving time in Juvenile Hall, she added. "A system like this one is bound to fail." Otto thinks programs to rehabilitate are more effective in stopping minors from committing multiple offenses than are punitive systems.

Stephanie Abeyta, Legislative Aid to Assemblyman Rod Pacheco, said much of the bill was cut out due to lack of funding. A portion of the bill proposed a "school safety program," said Abeyta. That section of the bill was ommitted, though. She said it is important for school principals as well as classroom teachers to know if one of their students is a serious offender.

A part of the bill that still remains does allow more people to know the names of serious youthful offenders. Senate Bill 334 permits newpapers and other public information sources to print the names and pictures of juveniles who are charged as adults.

There is less clarity about this aspect of the bill among people familiar with it than with the bill's main angle. Neither Abeyta nor Robeson was positive about when exactly names and pictures can be released.

Senate Bill 334 is actually a weaker version of a bill that will be on California ballots in March 2000. Prop 21, also known as the Wilson Intiative, uses the same idea proposed in Senate Bill 334 and takes it to a higher level, said Sue Barrill of the Youth Law Center in San Francisco.

"If Prop 21 passes, it will send many 14 and 15 year olds into the adult system," said Barrill. According to a fact sheet on Prop 21 prepared by the Youth Law Center, Prop 21 would try more juveniles, as young as 14, in the adult system. It would also allow juveniles to be sent to adult jails in certain, very severe cases. The passage of Prop 21 could even "create major housing problems for the Department of Corrections," as it would cause an "influx of 16 and 17 year old minors," said the Youth Law Center's fact sheet.

"The balance has gone too far. The reason we have a juvenile system is that you don't grow up all at once. At a younger age, kids don't have the maturity to act as adults....To think that a 14 year old could get life is appalling."

- Sue Barrill, Youth Law Center

Former California Governor Pete Wilson introduced Prop 21. At the time, he was considering a run for the presidency, and he thought his endorsement of Prop 21 would help him create a tough-on-crime image, said Barrill.

Barrill is very opposed to Prop 21. Though she said, "It's wrong to think that kids can just get a slap on the wrist," she thinks Prop 21 would take that idea to an unnecesary level. "The balance has gone too far. The reason we have a juvenile system is that you don't grow up all at once. At a younger age, kids don't have the maturity to act as adults," said Barrill. "To think that a 14 year old could get life is appalling."

If Prop 21 passes, 30,000 more juveniles will be elgible to be tried as adults, according to Barrill. It would change the juvenile justice system much more than Senate Bill 334. According to the Youth Law Center's fact sheet, Prop 21 would increase punishment for non-violent offenses. Senate Bill 334 only deals with juveniles who commit very serious offenses involving a weapon.

Prop 21 would make vandalism by a juvenile, with damage of less than $400, punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for up to a year or a fine of up to $1,000. It would also allow all members of criminal street gangs to be convicted under gang statutes, whether the person is a current or former gang member. Prop 21 would require gang registration for five years for juveniles convicted of gang-related offenses. According to the Youth Law Center's fact sheet, this filing of gang-related cases would make it "difficult for former gang members to move ahead in their lives even when their cases are over."

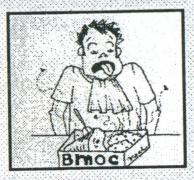
Senate Bill 334 already lets the 3-Strikes Law apply to juveniles who are tried as adults because of the severity of their crimes. Prop 21 would make even more crimes eligible to the 3-Strikes Law for juvenile offenders. It would also give longer sentences to juveniles tried in the adult system.

While both Barrill and Otto are opposed to the measures proposed in Prop 21, Officer Seliga said, "Anytime there's a bill that makes punishments more severe for juveniles, it has a positive impact."

Barrill, on the other hand, said, "I think with Prop 21, the changes in the juvenile justice system reach a ridiculous stage."

A CALANES BLUEPRINT
OPINION

INSIDE .....



Cafeteria Food pg.19

BLUEPRINT EDITORIAL

Political Correctness Is Incorrect

American society has become dominated by an overwhelming ideal of political correctness. Just one day at the Acalanes campus will justify this fact beyond a shadow of a doubt. No student can go through a day without seeing anti-homophobia signs or gay pride flags hanging in classrooms, with at least one classroom hanging the rainbow flag higher than the American flag.

Today's culture has become so intrinsically involved in recognizing people for their differences, it has forgotten to acknowledge different people for their achievements. The gay pride parade is a perfect example of this. Instead of recognizing individuals for their accomplishments, people strut around in ridiculous clothing trying to flaunt how odd and obscene they can make themselves look.

While all of these emblems and articles of clothing are carrying a positive message of equality and anti hatred, they also broadside people with a hyper-awareness of this politically correct social view. Hypersensitivity has also crept its way into America's ethnic origins. Nowadays people can not be refered to as simply Americans. Instead Americans are known as African Americans, Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, French Americans, and Native Americans.

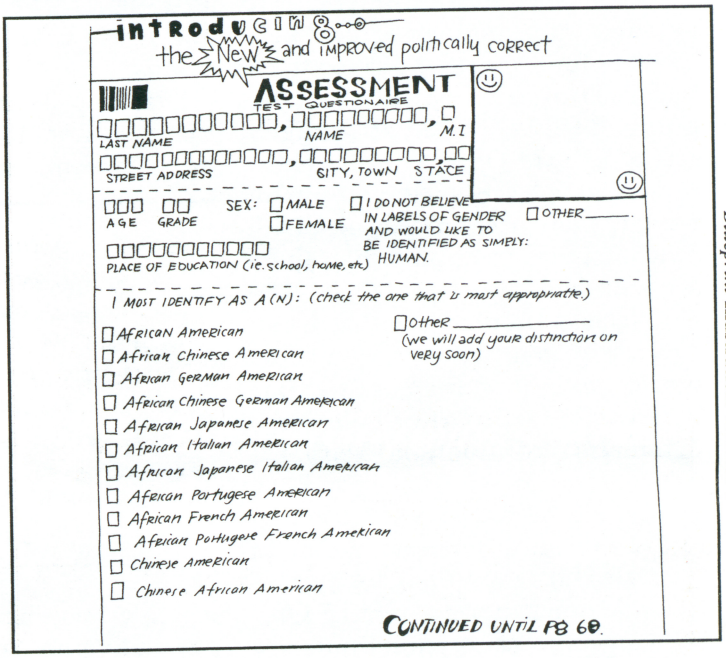
This whole idea of double ethnicities is somewhat peculiar. When it comes down to the wire, are we not all Americans? Do we not all exist in the same country? Don't we all face similar problems whether they are social or political? Why must society insist upon naming the ethnic background for every different minority that exists within the country?

According to the latest census of California, whites now make up 49% of the population. That means that every person in the whole state deserves to have the same BI-ethnic connotation to his or her name. This is great for the average Californian, instead of being an American; he or she will be called a German Italian English American. After all that is where most of his or her ancestors are from.

Better yet, let's take this same form of ethnic naming overseas and see how it would work in other countries. People of Chinese ancestry who moved to Korea would be known as Chinese Koreans. Citizens from Russia that moved to South Africa would be known as South African Russians. Best of all, Native Americans from the United States who moved to Japan would be Native American Japanese.

In the business world, presidents and CEO's live in fear of constant harassment and law suits from employees that claim they are being discriminated against due to sex or ethnicity. According to statistics released by the NAIC (National Association of Insurance Commissioners) one of the largest insurance policy growths was employment practices liability. This liability insurance protects these presidents and CEO's from frivolous lawsuits filed against them for discrimination, and wrongful discharge.

Why is this? What has caused this dramatic shift in a supposed claim for civil and equal rights? Maybe it is a continued social reaction to the turbulent times our country has seen, maybe it isn't. The truth of the matter is that no one really knows the cause. On the contrary though, the solution is obvious. Society as a whole needs to back off and relax a little bit and people need to stop looking for any comment or act which might be slightly biased in its intent or meaning.



Blueprint Illustration/Victoria Yu

HANNAH AND FLAK TALK BACK

Making New Year's Wishes Come True

By Hannah Hens-Piazza
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Jubilee 2000 is one of the most ingenious and wonderful proposals I have ever heard of.

Jubilee 2000 is a petition to forgive all the debts of the third world coutries. Since a new millennium is beginning, why not give a new beginning to everyone in the world?

Here in America there are many of us just caught up in what our new year's resolutions will be for 2000. Some of us are resolving to get better grades. Some of us are resolving to get along better with our siblings. Some of us are resolving to be better people and some of us are resolving to buy fewer shoes.

But all of these things seem trivial when compared to what some countries in the world would like to resolve to do. Start over. Jubilee would give them that opportunity. The question is, is America a forgiving enough country? Well, we forgave Japan after World War II, we're forgiving China for alleged human rights violations, we forgave O.J. Simpson (did I say that?). But are we ready, as a nation, to forgive the debts of coutries who owe us? I hope so.

Jubilee was actually a Biblical tradition where every seven years, the debts of all the indebted nations or tribes were forgiven. People were given a chance to start over.

And that's what Jubilee 2000 is about—people. The petition is not just to let nations have another chance. It would be a new start for one billion people in the world. That seems mind-boggling when compared to our meek one-person resolutions.

The people of the third world deserve a new start. So much of the world's labor comes from those countries. And although the people of the third world may be struggling, they struggle with hope. In my travels to Paraguay and Guatemala, I saw just this. In the midst of crumbling infrastructures, I saw faces of hope. I saw people working in the streets selling hand-made goods with smiles on their faces. In America, there are corporation heads who complain because they want another raise. It is so important for Americans to put their lives in perspective.

Jubilee 2000 is a debt-free start for a billion people. Support for the proposal will not hurt anyone. Our economy will not change. Signing the petition can only help. It will make one billion new year's resolutions true. Please support Jubilee 2000.

Teens Face New Year's Conundrum

Please, bouncer-man, it's the party of a lifetime...

Andria Flakoll
Co-Editor-In-Chief

As we near Winter Break, students will lose any motivation they've held on to thus far. All thoughts will be stationed elsewhere, and when teachers notice this epidemic of ADD sweeping across the campus, it's for a very appropriate reason. The party of the century is exactly eighteen days away...and counting.

Contrary to popular belief, if there's any year not to be a high school student, it's this one. It's an awkward age to join in the New Year's festivities. Teenagers are too young to party like the big college students and too old to stay at home with their mommies and daddies.

Seniors haven't quite reached the second semester status, but they have been living and breathing college applications, so they might as well be Acalanes alumni. My prediction? They'll want to live it up this New Year's, but if they tried it would be a repeat of every other weekend during the school year with added noise makers and confetti.

Parents also find themselves in an awkward predicament. What do you tell your college-bound son or daughter when they ask if they can head out to San Francisco for the New Years festivities? No, would be harsh. They are afterall eighteen or soon to be eighteen, they leave for college in a few months where you can't control them at all, and have a heart, they're kids, and the millennium is the event of a lifetime.

Parents of freshmen, sophomores, and juniors have an even tighter rope. Good luck, but if you do find your New Year's Eve plans crumbled by a heartless parent, cheer up. Many people say all this millennium hype should be for 2001, so keep your sights set on next year.

Now is the perfect time to be 21, not too old and not too young. Young adults in their twenties can go anywhere their hearts desire and their wallets will allow. They're truly lucky to be alive for the turn of the century. For everyone who plans to stay at home renting cheesy videos, you're just fooling yourself. New Year's Eve 2000 will turn out to be "just another night" unless you sets your sights high and your plans big.

For all high school students, whatever you do, don't turn on the TV's coverage of all the amazing parties happening all across the nation. It will only make you drool and look stupid.

I predict that one event will occur, marking the end of the 21st century. Fake ID's will be on every teenagers Christmas list. The only question is will Santa's naughty elves provide?

Hannah and Flak Talk Back

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Acalanes students,

As students at Acalanes, we always thought we had the best teachers around. However, this is not always true. At the very least, teachers should be there to help students pursue their goal of an elite education. When teachers cannot admit to their faults, it only hinders students' education. It's frustrating when students create a more efficient way of solving a problem, and the teacher ignorantly disregards it because it's not his or her way of teaching. It's surprising to see an Acalanes teacher become defensive when challenged by a student, turning the situation into a competition by giving an answer that has nothing to do with what the student is addressing so that the teacher feels superior. It seems more and more that students are in a class to get a good grade, while they ignore the fact that the reason they are in school is to truly understand the curriculum. It is because of the way some teachers teach that students are forced to disregard their deep understanding of the concept being taught and instead concentrate on meaningless points. There is force of injustice when a student receives a D on a test, yet every problem has the correct answer. When a student goes to a teacher to seek help, it is assumed that the teacher will provide the student with adequate help. It is unfair when the student sacrifices his or her time to better his or her understanding of a concept, and the student walks out of the classroom still not understanding because the teacher has failed to do his or her part. Arrogant teachers are a cancer to the educational process, and in the end, the students are the only ones who suffer.

-Disturbed Fellow Classmates

Dear Editor,

We are submitting an indignant complaint about your article "The Way of the Hand and Foot." We found this article extremley offensive towards the sport of Tae Kwon Do in general and more specifically towards Kangs Tae Kwon Do Academy. This article portrays both the sport and school as unclean, disgusting, and militaristic. The slandereous representation of this 2,000-year-old art form is completley non-indicative of the cleanliness plus level of discipline upheld by its practicioners. The sport deserves as much if not more respect as the more mainstream, Americanized sports. We feel that your comments were not only personally offensive, but were also a gross misrepresentation of this dignified sport. We hope that in the future you will more thouroughly examine the facts of your article.

Thank you for your time,
Anonymous

Dear Editor,

I am responding to the controversial and demeaning article printed in the last issue of *Blueprint* concerning women in the military. It is blatantly obvious to even the most passive observer of military affairs that modern day combat need not differentiate between the male and female gender. It does not take an individual in top physical shape to fire the modern day weapon of ground combat, the gun. Women and men can handle guns with equal finesse, and thus both should be allowed on the battle field. The Israeli government and their society has already resolved this petty issue with extreme swiftness and confidence, and the result is that now both women and men peacefully coexisting in the military. In conclusion, the issues brought up in the previous *Blueprint* issue were poor and outdated; it is obvious that women and men should be allowed to coexist in the military.

-Vijay Sekhon

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CITIZEN SAM

Free Trade and the WTO Hit the Mat

By Sam Cunningham
Staff Writer

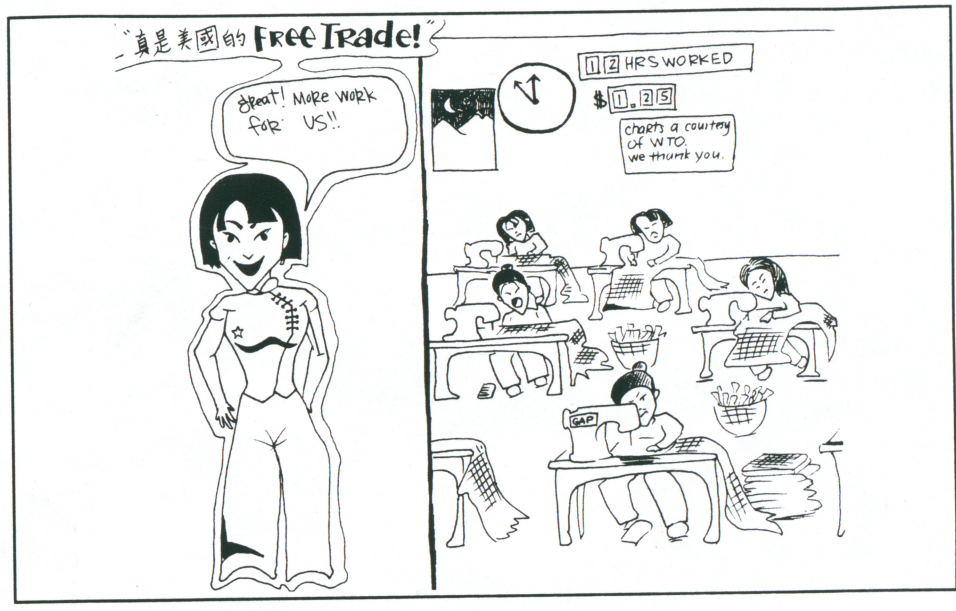
The World Trade Organization's ministerial summit in Seattle ended in failure last week when the delegates from 135 countries could not reach agreement on an agenda for the next round of free trade negotiations. By the Friday evening deadline, talks had collapsed and the WTO announced that it would resume attempts to reach a consensus after reconvening in Geneva, Switzerland next year.

The collapse of deliberations was aided in no small part by the sixty thousand anti-WTO protesters marching through the streets of Seattle. After rioting on Tuesday forced the delay and then moving of the opening ceremonies, the protestors and their message of "people above profits" grabbed front-page headlines across the nation.

The protest was significant. The position of anti-WTO conservative, in a nutshell, is that free trade has given us cheap shoes, but taken *our* shoe factories. By blindly and indiscriminately dropping trade barriers with low-wage nations like China and Mexico, the United States is causing severe long-term problems for its economy.

Rather than supply a long, detailed explanation of how foreign competition drives down American wages and exports jobs, it is important to simply note that the $15/hour labor cost in the U.S. cannot compete with the 50 cents/hour in south China. Our consumer markets will be flooded with cheap foreign-manufactured products. In an effort to keep up with globalized rivals, American businesses are closing factories and moving production overseas and south of the border, where the ridiculously low cost of labor ensures a higher profit margin and a lower tag price.

This has caused "inefficient" American factories to be closed, and our manufacturing industries packed up and moved for the gain of multinational corporations. According to information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the 31 percent of Americans employed in manufacturing industries at the height of middle class prosperity in the '50s had fallen to 15 percent by the mid-point of this decade. While this partly reflects the socioeconomic rise of an educated Baby Boomer workforce, it is also a result of the erosion of the American manufacturing base by free trade. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that since the end of the postwar boom in 1978, the U.S. has lost 2.4 million high-wage manufacturing jobs to free trade. Other researchers put this figure closer to 12 million.



Blueprint Illustration/Victoria Yu

Free trade proponents and the Clinton Administration defend against such seven-figure realities by claiming their economic liberalization (NAFTA, GATT) causes a net increase in jobs. To their credit, they are correct — free trade does increase the overall size of the job market. However, the jobs created by free trade are not high-wage manufacturing ones like those exported, but almost exclusively $8/h service sector occupations. In a society where higher education is the only key to financial success, a large segment of the middle class has been forced by the circumstances out of $15/h factory work and into the ranks of the working poor. Cities like Detroit and Oakland stand as silent testimony to this tragedy.

In no small part due to de-industrialization, America is rapidly heading for a two-tier economic system. A society of educated, wealthy "haves" and impoverished, disenfranchised "have-nots" will become a reality in the next century. We are already on the way: the Census Bureau reports that since 1980, the share of middle-income households has fallen from 71 percent to 59 percent. Both upper-income and lower-income households have increased by a third.

Of course "save the jobs" proponents such as myself are often ridiculed by politicians and academic economists as knee-jerk protectionists lacking the brain power to understand the complexities of the global economy. It is not uncommon to find the opinion pages of our nation's newspapers attacking the protesters pushing the creation of an isolationist, Buchananistic "Fortress America."

In reality, nothing could be further from the truth. Rather than put up formidable walls around the country, the United States must use selective tariffs to protect key industries from exportation to low-wage countries. The total globalization of labor will be complete within a few decades — our economy mustn't fall victim to international forces like the British economy in the 19th century and the Dutch economy in the 17th century.

The more the enormous economic and social implications of free trade are considered, the more the failure of the WTO talks in Seattle seems like a victory for the forces of good. The United States is one step closer to shelving free trade and enacting *fair* trade.

SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Cafeteria Food: A Diet That Really Works

By Charlie Massie
Opinion Editor

Two years ago, Matt Blitz led a school wide rebellion against the makers of the campus cuisine that was served to Acalanes students at break and lunch. Within one week the monopolizing Marriott Corporation capitulated to the student's demands and promised to finally serve "better meals on campus."

So much for the promise of a major corporation, two years after the boycott, the students are still being served the same dishes with as little or even less quality than was served before. Well, except for the french fries.

What happened to the promises of better meals on campus? Just because Marriott puts labels on these new "meals" they are serving us and calls them BMOC's does not mean they actually taste good.

Imagine Monday morning at 9:45 am, students still recovering from weekend excursions, leave their second period classrooms aching for some food to revive them from the bore of the past two periods.

They race out of their classrooms, sprinting down the hallway yearning to get a spot in the precious food line. Once arriving at the food carts they gaze at the limited assortment of cuisine. The first treats that catch their eyes are the latest zombie creations from the cafeteria kitchen. Not only do these muffin-wannabes' taste differently every day, sometimes there is a special liquid filled center thrown in as a treat.

After deciding not to order something that causes them to throw up, the students look for more edible options. Unfortunately their taste buds go unsatisfied because there is simply nothing worth buying.

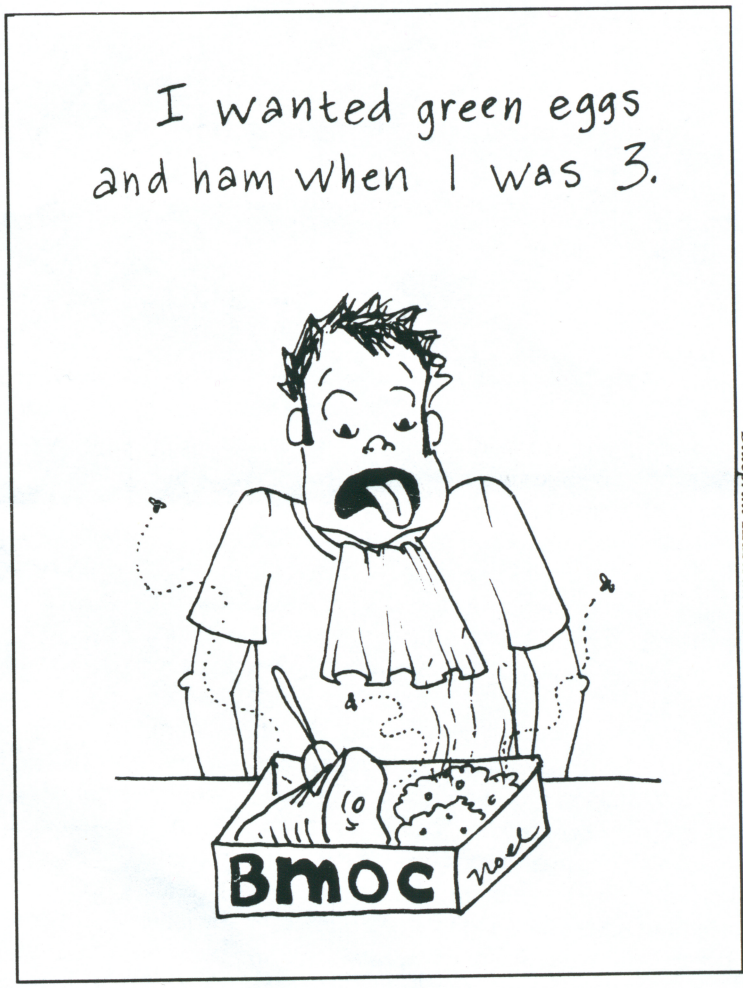
If people think break has bad cuisine, just wait until lunch. Take the latest BMOC, a grilled pepper jack chicken sandwich on a roll. As an innocent student plops down $3.75 to pay for this masterpiece along with a large order of French fries and a Coke, he has visions of a delicious meal ahead of him. The student looks at the white colored bag in which the sandwich is stored and thinks to himself, "This is really going to be a treat."

As he opens the bag and engorges upon his first bite, he is met with a most chilling surprise. Not only does this concoction not taste like a scrumptious grilled chicken sandwich from Jack in the Box or Wendys, it tastes like a raw veggie burger that has too much cabbage in it.

The innocent student then throws down his meal in disgust, convulsing and angry from the lack of satisfaction he has gotten from his sandwich. He then proceeds to march back to the food cart hoping he will be able to purchase something more edible.

As he scans the cart and looks at the interestingly shaped, barely edible bread sticks, the fermented pieces of pizza, and the hamburgers whose meat quality makes McDonald's look like filet mignon, he realizes that all hopes of salvaging his lunch are gone. He then marches back to the Senior Deck chiding himself for not having prepared a lunch the night before.

One might think that the administration would try to do something to facilitate the acquisition of better food, or even better food providers. Yet, there is nothing it can do. Marriott has a monopoly granted to them via a contract over the distribution of food on campus. If students want better food, they will have to take it in their own hands to see that they get it.



Blueprint Illustration/Noel Fahden

SATIRE

How Jostens Rings Up Profits

By Peter Deng
Copy Editor

"Please excuse the interruption. The Jostens representative will be in the quad today at lunch so come and..."

"Hooray! Class rings are here! Class rings have finally arrived! After months of waiting, they've arrived! Now I'll be just like those COOL people in the catalog!"

Yeah! Yeah, class rings. Those wonderful, lustrous, and expensive (or made to look expensive) class rings. They are sooo coool, and very sentimental. Your having that ring stands for your hard-reached graduation (or the graduation you have hardly reached for) and your completing all those rigorous required courses. You'll look back at your high school years and say, "Boy, was it tough to graduate! Jensen gaved i a B in inglish! Should of gaven him mo' blood money... or learned how to do a frog headstand...."

But wait, there's more!

In addition to the feeling of accomplishment, you will feel the connection to your ring as you have customized it yourself! First of all, you get two sides to customize. There are many pictures from which to choose. The process is simple; you chose your favorite activity from your high school career (even though you are only a sophomore when you are compelled to buy a ring). They have the most popular activities high schoolers do—from bull riding to calf roping, from drag racing to barrel racing, and from SADD to pheasant hunting. They've got absolutly all the Acalanes activities—except for the inverting of those spirit-raising bottles.

The sleek rings come with your choice of birthstones. That's right! Just ascertain the month you were born (i.e. August), an educational exercise in itself. The company will then look at the traditional birthstone (Peridot for August) and look at the color (green). The molded green stone is, of course, customized with your choice of "cut." It is made of "some kind of plastic*," as a Jostens representative so precisely stated.

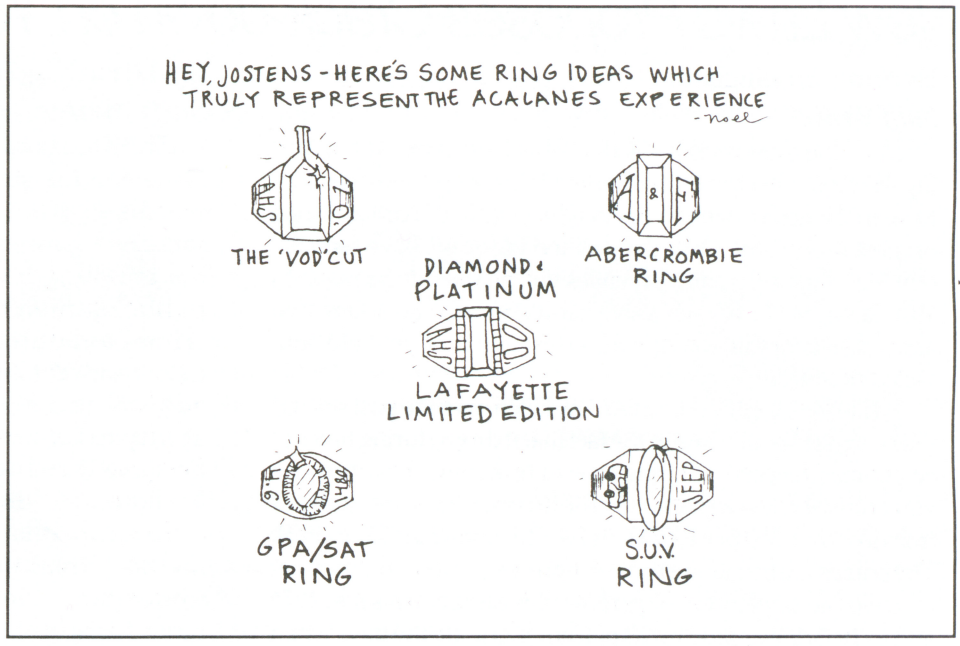
In addition, the ringleader will include your signature or printed name inscribed INSIDE your ring—a $200.00 value available to you at no charge! This is especially. They will then return your ring to you, the rightful owner; after all, it was customized to your finger. Or, when you become older and need to be reminded of what your name was in high school, you can always dig the little black box from beneath the rubble of your closet, open it, and look inside the ring. There you will find your name exactly as it was in your high school years, immortalized for all eternity! Just pull out your useful, multi-functional class ring, and you'll know who you are, where you're from, what you did, and it'll take you through the backstreets to all your pleasant memories.

Your personalized ring is guaranteed for (your) life. They will hastily replace the ring if their "workers" screwed up. They will repaint it if the gold paint peels. They will re-dip it in lacquer if it loses luster. It will collect value (and dust) over the years—assuming you won't misplace it in that old shoebox with your Pokemon card collection.

If the calamity arises that you lose your class ring, the lord of the rings has a solution. For a negligible $80, Jostens will make a new one for you. Eighty dollars is negligible—considering the $345.32 you paid for the first one. That's the price of Boardwalk!

Oh! That reminds me! What's that game called... mono?... no, no, that's not it. But it would be one hell of a game, right? Umm... That's it! MONOPOLY! What a wonderful game! Get rich, get others bankrupt, give luxury tax... it's my personal favorite! Apparently, the capitalistic game is Jostens's favorite game as well. First, you receive a card in the mail. (No, it's not the "GET OUT OF JAIL FREE" card.) The card reads "The Official Class Ring...Jostens." Then the part about the $50.00 deposit (asking for money). Then the savings: "A savings of $15.00-$75.00!" WOW! You can save up to seventy-five dollars!

On a more serious note, I've always wondered when this "Class Ring Tradition" started because home lahnd Chiiina no have tis trah-dish-on. After countless sleepless nights, I have come to the conclusion. Class rings started when Jostens was founded! One night, a capitalist was playing Monopoly. Losing in life as well as the game, he thought, "It would be great to make easy money! Hmmm... I need an easy target... Ahh!" The man then saw the Luxury Tax space with the sparkling ring. "Eureka! Prod the emotional and sentimental side of school children with glossy, color catalogs brimming with gleeful, smiling peers!" he exclaimed with eyes glittering like diamonds—plastic ones, of course.



Blueprint Illustration/Noel Fahden

*In order to keep costs to their absolute minimum, Jostens must use these simulated stones and "workers." But Jostens does assure you that you are getting top-quality colored plastic, none of that recycled stuff!

PRO/CON

Should Juveniles Be Tried as Adults?

New Laws Proposes Crack-down on Youth Offenders

By Sam Cunningham
Staff Writer

Of all the important revelations that have come about during the 1990's, the fact that our juvenile justice system does conform to the reality of the times in which we live is certainly one of most prominent. Over the past ten years, we have seen the criminal degree to which juveniles will go steadily increase. In 1999 alone, we have seen a six year-old murder an infant, two teens massacre thirteen of their peers, and a 13-year-old convicted of murder.

While the juvenile crime rate has fallen over the past several years, it mirrors all crime in the fact that it drops during times of economic prosperity. During time of economic downturn, juvenile crime rates skyrocketed. The juvenile crime rate jumped from just over 300 per 100,000 in 1987 to more than 500 in 1994. The crimes are becoming more serious too, such as the fact that juveniles accounted for 16 percent of weapons arrests in 1974 and in 1993, they made up 23 percent. Gone are the days when juvenile court proceedings were over petty acts such as vandalism and shoplifting.

And when youths commit adult crimes such as assault, rape, or even murder, they should be punished as adults. Attempting to legislate a dichotomy with a concrete age at which adult consequences can be handed down is foolish. The individual subjective moral development of a youth cannot be determined through legislation and bureaucracy. All defendants in our legal system must be subject to identical punishments, regardless of age.

This is especially true of violent crimes. Senate Bill 334 recently passed in the California Legislature. The law will automatically try as adults all youths 16-years-old and up who have been accused of a very serious crime such as murder. This eliminates the haphazard court bureaucracy that normally decides whether a individual can be tried as an adult. This program should be extended to cover all age ranges in all 50 states. The time has come to put a leash on youth crime with harsh punishment and swift jutstice.

Those who oppose the notion of young people "doing adult time for adult crimes" often spout moralizing rhetoric about "innocent, impressionable children" who do not know the fundamental difference between right and wrong. This argument could have a measure of success when applied to a five year-old defendant, but is totally baseless when dealing with individuals of say, age eleven. In our highly communicative society, the time necessary to learn that murder is a bad thing should not be perceived to exceed the first grade.

As our social fabric continues to decay, juvenile crime will only increase. For the sake of stability and order, we must be prepared to punish juvenile who commit adult crimes with adult punishments.

By Hiro Kagiyama
Staff Writer

Children and the law has been a controversial issue for the past half century as more and more youths commit violent crimes such as rape and murder within the United States. With a rash of students killing one another, there is a rising trend of public opinion to try juviniles who commit violent crimes as adults because they have made an "adult decision." Yet convicting a child of any crime as an adult is unconscionable because the child lacks the ability to form malicious intent and it is also wrong because it reduces the chance for the child to ever become anything but a criminal.

Even in this day and age of technological and medical breakthroughs, we are still unable to fully understand the developing human brain. Yet we have found that with developing minds the ability to see right and wrong is clouded, and due to this children are very susceptible to the pressures of their peers. The idea that children are greatly affected by outside influences has been proven in the the war-stricken area of Serbia, where childeren have become more violent due to the fact that they have been subjected to a violent environment. Also many psychologists through testing and observation that the developing mind is basically incapable of formulating intent until the person reaches the ages of 18-20.

Also, it is contradictory to sentence a minor, who can not vote, serve in the army, buy alcohol, or even buy cigarettes, as an adult because adults have the freedom and ability to make an adult decisions. And since the law treats people under 18 as juveniles, by denying them adult rights, the law has no right to treat them as adults in regards to crime.

Even though there are many things that children do lack, they do have the amazing ability to change, unlike many adults criminal or otherwise. Also the fact of the matter is that society has consciously chosen to seperate children and adults by naming them children and adults. Therefore, it is illogical to sentence a child as an adult, something he is not.

Finally it is illogical to send children to jail for a crime that society is partly responsible for with violent television, children with parents who both work, and alcohol and drugs. Due to these circumstances, society creates these criminal juveniles and has a duty to reform, not punish, them for mistakes made by society.

INSIDE . . . . . .

Radio Stations
Pg. 27

X-MAS SHOPPING

How To Get The X-mas Presents You Want

By Katie Burroughs
Staff Writer

Give Santa a break. With 6 billion people currently populating the planet, the guy is going to have a rough time this year. He has a lot of stockings to stuff in this materialistic world. The poor man has to lug his jolly pot-belly around in addition to all those bags of Christmas goodies. And, well, let's be frank, those reindeer have aged a bit since Rudolph was first excluded from all the reindeer games.

So let's keep it simple this year folks. Don't bother to tramp to the mall and sit on Saint Nick's lap. He's old. His memory is failing. He won't remember what you wanted anyway. You'll probably end up with a Pokemon toy instead of the new sneakers you wanted. So, forget about Saint Nick and the North Pole. Work the family and friends network. Ask Mom, Dad, brother, sister, Uncle Jim, and Grandma Francis for those must-haves. . ., but remember subtlety is everything when preping your family member for the big purchase.

I've got a few tips to help you get what you really want for Christmas this year, so just grab a pen and jot these sure-fire solution down.

When dealing with parents try the following:

"Mom, I saw the nicest fleece in the catalog that is sitting on the table. It is so nice that I sticky-tabbed the page. I bet if I ever owned it, it would be in a size medium. Yeah. It's really nice. Especially in Forest Green. Real nice. It's supposed to be a cold winter."

When dealing with siblings:

"Hey bratface! You know how you dented the hardwood floor last week? I bet it would be really awful if Dad found out. Really awful. Do you know what I want for Christmas? A new discman. So about that dent; it'd be really awful, huh?"

Blueprint Photo/Sophia Maund

As December comes around, more and more shoppers are attracted to Broadway Plaza and Sunvalley Shopping Mall to satisfy their shopping needs.

When dealing with you beau:

"Sweet 'ems, you are so caring and generous. Yeah. You really are the best boyfriend/girlfriend I've ever had. Really. You know want I think is romantic? Forty-eight dollar bottles of perfume/cologne. Really. Hey, is it December? It is, huh? Wow. That means Christmas is coming up. . ."

When dealing with Grandma shout the following:

"Three dollars doesn't buy a whole lot, haven't you noticed? Too bad I only get minimum wage working at Togo's after school! I am trying to save up for a new snowboard! Yeah, I am short fifty-seven dollars. Hey, you coming to our house for Christmas this year?"

And last, but not least, when dealing with Uncle Jim:

Write that thank-you note you never wrote from last Christmas and forge the postmark date so it looks like the mailman is just a severe slacker. Inside print the following:

Dear Uncle Jim,

The gift you gave me was really useful. I never knew I always wanted a purple aluminum lantern for my bedroom. Thanks. I bet a new Mountain Hardware tent would go really well with that lantern. I guess I will have to wait till next Christmas to get one. I really want one of those tents. Thanks again. Somehow you always seem to get me what I really want.

Love you almost as much as I would a new tent

Alex

Well, that's all for now folks. Just remember that any tactic that gets you that gift is good enough. . .even if you have to smash your friend's face into GAP's store front window to get the point across. Good "gift-getting" luck. Oh yeah, and remember that if you get any bogus gifts that just means one less that you have to buy for someone else. In other words, recycle the wool underwear knit by Aunt Alice and wrap it up for your oh-so-lucky pal.

FINE ARTS

Fine Arts

Untitled

Sometimes we never learn
That hearts can be broken
twice.
We often forget when the
Time comes to love again.
And we sometimes forget
that
Kisses aren't promises from
him
To love you, even though he
Seemed so sincere.
And when he tells you that
You are perfect for him, you
May be, but will he be
Perfect for you?
When he holds you in his
Arms and strokes your
Hair it isn't a contract that
He'll stick around.
When you love him so much
It hurts to wait for for him
To love you back, and if you
Wait and he still can't
Return your love
Be content and try to find
The strength to love again.

—Anonymous

STARING

Jackie Keogh

My eyes lock on to the unknown,
Although what I see seems so familiar.
My eyes caress the figure,
Look it up and down.
I turn away, as if I am scared.
But then my eyes see only darkness.
My eyes, afraid of what I might see,
My heart beats so fast, like the rhythm of a drum.
A hand touches my shoulder.
I stutter, not revealing what I feel inside.
Words are spoken, tossed back and forth.
Awkward silence interrupts these words.
My eyes now gaze around.
My feet cannot keep still.
I look up and see
His eyes staring at me.

MOVIE REVIEWS

Sleepy Hollow an Absolute Nightmare

By Elisabeth Geier
Staff Writer

In Theaters Now: **Sleepy Hollow** *(Dir. Tim Burton. Johnny Depp, Christina Ricci) Rated R*

A personal note to Johnny Depp, should he happen to be reading Blueprint: Johnny, doll, there is no denying that two of your most brilliant performances, in *Edward Scissorhands* and *Ed Wood*, were under the direction of Tim Burton. Burton is a living legend, one of the most freakishly innovative and engaging filmmakers ever to strike up a thunderstorm under studio skies. However, even the best sometimes falter. I would expect you, an actor who makes it a point to choose radically different and challenging roles, to recognize that genius is not consistent. As much as it hurts me to say this, I'm beginning to doubt your decision-making skills. First *The Astronaut's Wife* and now this? In the case of Burton's latest effort, *Sleepy Hollow*, you would have been better off supporting the director as a friend, rather than becoming a player in this flawed film that causes one to wonder whether Burton's glory days are gone.

Sleepy Hollow opens in classic Burton style, with title credits in billowing fog over a dark and gloomy gothic backdrop. Set in 1799, the story begins as New York City deputy Ichabod Crane (Depp) is sent to the upper-state hamlet of Sleepy Hollow to investigate a string of mysterious beheadings said to be the work of the legendary Headless Horseman. While seeking out the killer, Ichabod meets Katrina Van Tassel, the bewitching daughter of Sleepy Hollow's most respected citizen. Ahhh, love is in the air--and so are plenty of dismembered heads. Sleepy Hollow, adapted from Washington Irving's novel of the same title, has the potential to be a terrifying film. However, Burton falls short in his reworking of the classic tale. It seems as if Burton set out to satirize, with intentionally over-the-top settings and performances. But somewhere along the way, the director must have lost track of his own purpose because it never becomes clear to the audience just what exactly is being lampooned here. This vagueness ultimately keeps the film from becoming anything more than a shallow horror flick.

The actors in *Sleepy Hollow* are all that save it from becoming a completely failed experiment. Ricci, in her first role in a Tim Burton film (why it took so long is beyond me; his movies are practically made for her) is as enchanting as ever as Katrina. And Johnny Depp is hilarious in the role of Ichabod Crane, shivering and swooning cartoonishly. Still, one cannot help but ponder how much better this film could have become, had Burton been less wishy-washy in his satirization. Sadly, now we'll never know. Oh, and Johnny, if you're still reading--I don't hold it against you; you're only human. Give me a call the next time you're in town.

Grade:C+

BLUEPRINT REVIEW

-Good -Poor

-Excellent -Horrible

Blueprint's top ten recommended holiday movies

Blueprint *would like to make these suggestions for some holiday films that everybody ought to be familiar with. All titles are available on video, but keep your eyes peeled for television airings, as many networks have repeated showings of these films during the month of December.*

1. ***It's a Wonderful Life*** **(1946) NR**
2. ***Miracle on 34th Street*** **(1947) NR**
3. ***Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*** **(1964) NR**
4. ***A Charlie Brown Christmas*** **(1965) NR**
5. ***How the Grinch Stole Christmas*** **(1966) NR**
6. ***A Christmas Story*** **(1984) PG**
7. ***Scrooged*** **(1988) PG-13**
8. ***National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*** **(1989) PG-13**
9. ***Home Alone*** **(1990) PG**
10. ***A Rugrats Chanukah*** **(1997)**

On Video: Tim Burton's **Nightmare Before Christmas** *(1993) Rated PG*

Now here is a shining example of Tim Burton's true genius at work: A Christmas movie for kids with his trademark subversive spin. *The Nightmare Before Christmas* is an animated feature based on a story and characters conceived by Burton in a poem years before the film itself was made. In the hands of a capable team of stop-motion animators, Burton's characters are brought to life in a movie that deserves a place among the best of Disney's animated classics.

The Nightmare Before Christmas is the tale of Jack Skellington the Pumpkin King who has grown tired of the usual Halloween hyjinx and longs for something more than tricks or treats. When he stumbles into Christmas Town and witnesses the joy that the Yuletide brings, Jack decides to have Santa Claus kidnapped and take over the duties of St. Nick himself. In one of the film's perversely clever songs, Jack's hired henchmen sing, "Kidnap the Sandy Claus, chop him into bits."

Under the watchful eyes of producer Burton, director Henry Selick (*James and the Giant Peach*) and lyricist/composer Danny Elfman (who also provides the beautiful singing voice of Jack) manage to transform Burton's original poem into an fully fleshed-out, darkly funny fairy tale. Elfman, who has provided music for most of Burton's films (including *Batman* and *Beetlejuice*), takes Burton's words and gives them his own lyrical twist, setting them to a beautiful score to create one of the nicest movie soundtracks available. It is the combination of witty dialogue and music and hauntingly beautiful animation that make *The Nightmare Before Christmas* a perfect holiday film for all ages, well deserving of an annual family viewing.

Grade:A

PLAY REVIEW

Success Achieved on "Broadway"

By Heather Klurfeld
Entertainment Editor

Sex. Money. Murder. Corruption. Welcome to the fabulous "Roaring Twenties," the center of the Drama Department's fall production of "Broadway."

The play revolves around around a New York nightclub during Prohibition. The plot involves a jealous romance, a murder, another murder, and a happy ending. In other words, people are getting stewed while trying to protect their sugar and hide the jack that croaked from the New York dick (This is 1920s lingo. It means that people are getting drunk while trying to protect their money and hide the guy that was killed from the New York policeman).

Meet Roy Lane (Josh Garrett), a starstruck and hopeful dancer at the Paradise Nightclub. Lane wishes to have his "name in lights," as Garrett proclaims, with his dance partner and love interest, Billie Moore (Lindsay Hynek). His plans are foiled, though, when rich criminal Steve Crandall (Sean Schneider) enters the scene and attempts to steal Moore's saintly heart.

The action intensifies due to Crandall's criminal activities. His alchohol business is in competition with fellow mob boss, Scar Edwards (Phil Peyron). Crandall stoically kills Scar to protect his business ventures, and from here the play develops.

While Crandall is trying to cover-up his crime from ace-detective Dan McCorn (Darryl Wong), he attempts to woo Moore by showering her with expensive gifts, a blow to the bruised-egoed Lane. Lane jealously tries to win back Moore by proposing to her, but this results in a huge fight and she storms off into the arms of Crandall. Crandall ruthlessly has Lane implemented for the murder of Edwards. Lane is hauled off to jail like a witch in Salem while the "pious" Crandall remains with Moore.

As it turns out, one of the dancers is Edwards's girlfriend Pearl (Erika Staaf), doing some dirty detective work for him. When she learns that Crandall has killed her beau, she murders Crandall in a poised fit of rage. When McCorn arrives at the scene he announces that it was suicide, giving Pearl her freedom... and the show goes on.

Roy Lane (Josh Garrett) discusses his aspirations with 1920s club-goers Steve Crandall (Sean Schneider), Nick Verdis (James Applebury) and Billie Moore (Lindsay Hynek).

The acting in this performance was outrageously entertaining. The Garrett-Hyenk-Schneider love triangle proved to be a powerhouse production. Garrett's New York accent was perfect and his dancing was wildly amusing, keeping the audience in anticipation of what routine would come next (a possible career move Josh?). Roy Lane was impeccable, whether it be comical dancing or serious thought. His insane jealousy for Moore showed a man caught between macho pride and outright despair.

As always, Hynek was flawless. Her confused showgirl was full of angst and charisma. She was the precise mixture of tortured soul and confused girl. The true genius of her performance was captured in her connection to the audience. She successfully achieved the crucial connection between the character and the audience.

Schneider's villain was full of wit and wisdom, always maintaining a level head while rationalizing each "situation" that came before him. Crandall's arrogant demeanor and slick tactics resembled a street-smart hustler from Fifth Avenue. His intentions towards Moore, slimy and wicked as they were, were well-performed (you definitely wanted Billie to end up with Roy). But, at least "the guy knew how to dress," Schneider said.

The female supporting cast was engagingly impressive. Erika Staaf did an extraordinary performance as the brooding Pearl. She nailed the New York accent and was demure and poised, yet full of spite, reminding me of the audacious Rizzo from *Grease*. Lauren MacKenzie and Jessie Potts were uproaringly comical. Potts was full of sass while MacKenzie was full of class. Their backstage antics could be a play in its own right. Their squabbling came to a climax with Applebury carrying Potts over his shoulders to rescue her from MacKenzie's wrath--truly a Kodak moment.

The male supporting cast was a powerhouse of talent. James Applebury's push-over club owner expertly resembled a meek man, downtrodden and lacking luck. And Darryl Wong's street-smart cop was exceptional, full of both compassion and duty. The mobsters were amusing, especially Pork and Dolph (Todd Van Etten and Randall Szabo). The two were a great duo, one being the brains, the other being the heart. In ad-

continued on next page

CD REVIEWS

Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree

By Nick Allen
Staff Writer

Various Artist: A Very Special Christmas Live

Forget your solemn choirs and classic Christmas carols this holiday season. Instead, rock out with A *Very Special Christmas Live* the fourth installment in a series of contemporary groups playing your Christmas favorites. It's rock, it's blues, it's even hip-hop. But, more importantly, this is the difinitive party album for your joyous Christmas bash. All-star rockers Eric Clapton, Tracy Chapman, John Popper of the Blues Traveler, Run DMC, and Sheryl Crow come together to create this festive jam session that will warm the heart and move your feet. Classics such as "Please Come Home for Christmas" are injected with a healthy dose of rockin' blues courtesy of Clapton and Chapman, while Run DMC's "Christmas in Hollis" drops a little old-skool flavor into the mix. Speaking of Clapton, Eric Clapton's soulful blues guitars bring an extra warmth to every track that can blaze through even the coldest winter night. Vanessa Williams's contributes "What Child is This" to the eclectic mix with a slinky little jazz number that comes straight out of Santa's own smoke-filled jazz club (he has one you know). Sheryl Crow joins up with the ever-present Clapton for another upbeat jam, which is followed by an equally moving, but more traditional rendition of "Oh Holy Night" by Tracy Chapman. The final song "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," however, proves that the best really does come last. All the participating artists come together on this final track to make the ultimate Christmas rock-along, and at the same time jubilantly champion the true spirit of Christmas. So for those who have lost sight of the true meaning of Christmas or those who simply need to add a little spirit to their Christmas party, make this Christmas special with "A Very Special Christmas."

Blueprint Illustration/ Victoria Yu

continued from last page

dition, the sophomore mobsters were bursting with talent, a fresh addition to the Acalanes stage.

What seemed to make this play exceptional, although not a literary masterpiece, was its strong cast. "I take pride in the cast," said Applebury. "We made the play into something really great...it's pretty fantastic." Each member of the cast was full of talent and played a convincing character. "The whole effect was phenomenal," echoed Schneider. "Tve been out of the play for one week and I already miss it."

Drama Teacher Tom Eggertsen feels the play was a success. "They surpassed my expectations," Eggertsen said. However, he is disappointed with ticket sales. "We always have great audiences, but they're mostly adults." Eggertsen wishes the show had greater student attendence.

Despite the small crowd, "Broadway" was a comical hit. Those that did attend the show were not disappointed. My congratulations to Student Director Emily Murray and Stage Manager Dan Speir for an entertaining and enjoyable show. Murray believes "it truly was a success," the ultimate goal of all of those on "Broadway."

RADIO STATIONS

Radio Stations: The Good, Bad, The Ugly

By Heather Klurfeld
Entertainment Editor

The good old-fashioned radio. It's everywhere— in your car, in your room, even in your alarm clock. It plays the music that "you want to hear," as many radio stations claim. However, while radio stations may play current hits or "oldies but goodies," the person who decides what music will be broadcasted is usually not the DJ's voice or the listener's choice. In fact, the DJ has little control over what type of music is played. What's important is how much money the big corporations can make, not what type of music is played. Irony, anyone?

Music is not chosen by a DJ, who creates a playlist, one that fits the genre of the radio station. Rather, "what goes out over the air is usually the joint decision of the General Manager and the Program Director, with the input of department heads...and executives," said *Billboard/Airplay Monitor* Editor Sean Ross.

The executives use listener requests and "callout research" to decided what music we will hear, said Z95.7 DJ Katie Mason. Music is also sent to the radio stations by the record companies. The company executives will ask the station to play a song that they are trying to make a hit. "Labels take their best guesses as to what the potential hits are on an album," Ross said. Willingly, the stations comply.

This system would be fine, except that these directors load the songs into a computer which then schedules the songs for that day. (This explains why we hear Brittany Spears twelve times in two hours.) The computer cannot decide how often to play a song, though. It has one rule: if the song is popular, play it often. How about a little variety? (That only happens when the computer malfunctions and plays a Neil Diamond song instead of a Pearl Jam tune.)

The *Billboard* Top 100 electronically monitors all facets of music, from record sales to DJ playlists to listener requests, said *Billboard Magazine* Top 100 compiler Silvio Pietroluongo. "We monitor the airplay of the stations...we take into account the time the song was played and calculate the audience number for that particular time and for that particular station," Pietroluongo said. The *Billboard* Top 100 is the "authority" on the music in America, resulting in the garbage we hear on the radio.

Blueprint Illustration/Noel Fahden

The Top 100, although an indicator of what's popular, does not always reflect what is good. At present, the Top 100 is littered with untalented, studio-formulated acts such as the Spice Girls and the Backstreet Boys. Companies would like to sign a quality musician yet at the same time reach an audience, Ross said. "Certainly there aren't a lot of people sitting in a conference room saying, 'Let's deliberately sign terrible music and force it down people's throats.' But, success breeds imitation, so if there's one Spice Girls that's successful, there's likely to be six of them that are released," Ross said. Amen.

Although the DJs may not control the music that is played, they have the opportunity to "inject as much of our personality as we can" into their programs, says Mason. However, there are notes in the studio about station events that they should "ab lib around." Most stations agree that the bigger the event, the more air time it needs. (We're still talking about radio stations, right?).

DJs' air time is cut short by advertisers, though. Because San Francisco is one of the top radio markets, advertisers will pay exorbitant amounts of money for fifteen seconds of airtime, hoping that listeners will be brainwashed into buying their product. Their commercials, just like the music, are scheduled by computer. The stations run schedule their programming aroung the ads because "if advertisers don't support a station," Ross said, "it probably won't be around indefinitely."

Advertisers pay to promote their product. Thus, they want the best possible investment. They pay for promotional giveaways (a new car!!!) or can even become creative: I bet that dumb Abercrombie and Fitch song was written by an A&F executive who just wanted to sell more clothes; he came up with an innovative way to advertise (and to get a raise). Just remember: the music isn't important— it's what you buy as a result of listening to the music that is important.

Today's radio stations should be razed. They don't care about the music or the listeners. I suggest supporting the Wherehouse or joining BMG instead (they do give you 14 CDs for one penny, but that's another story).

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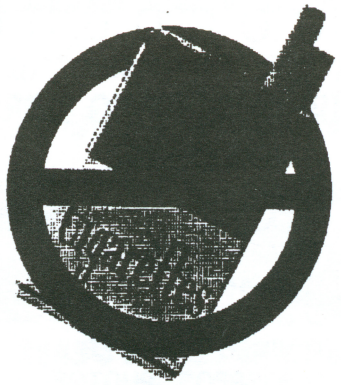

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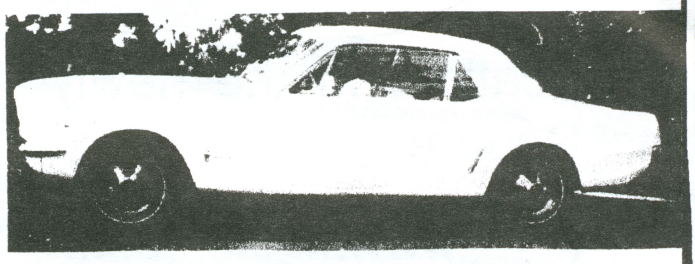

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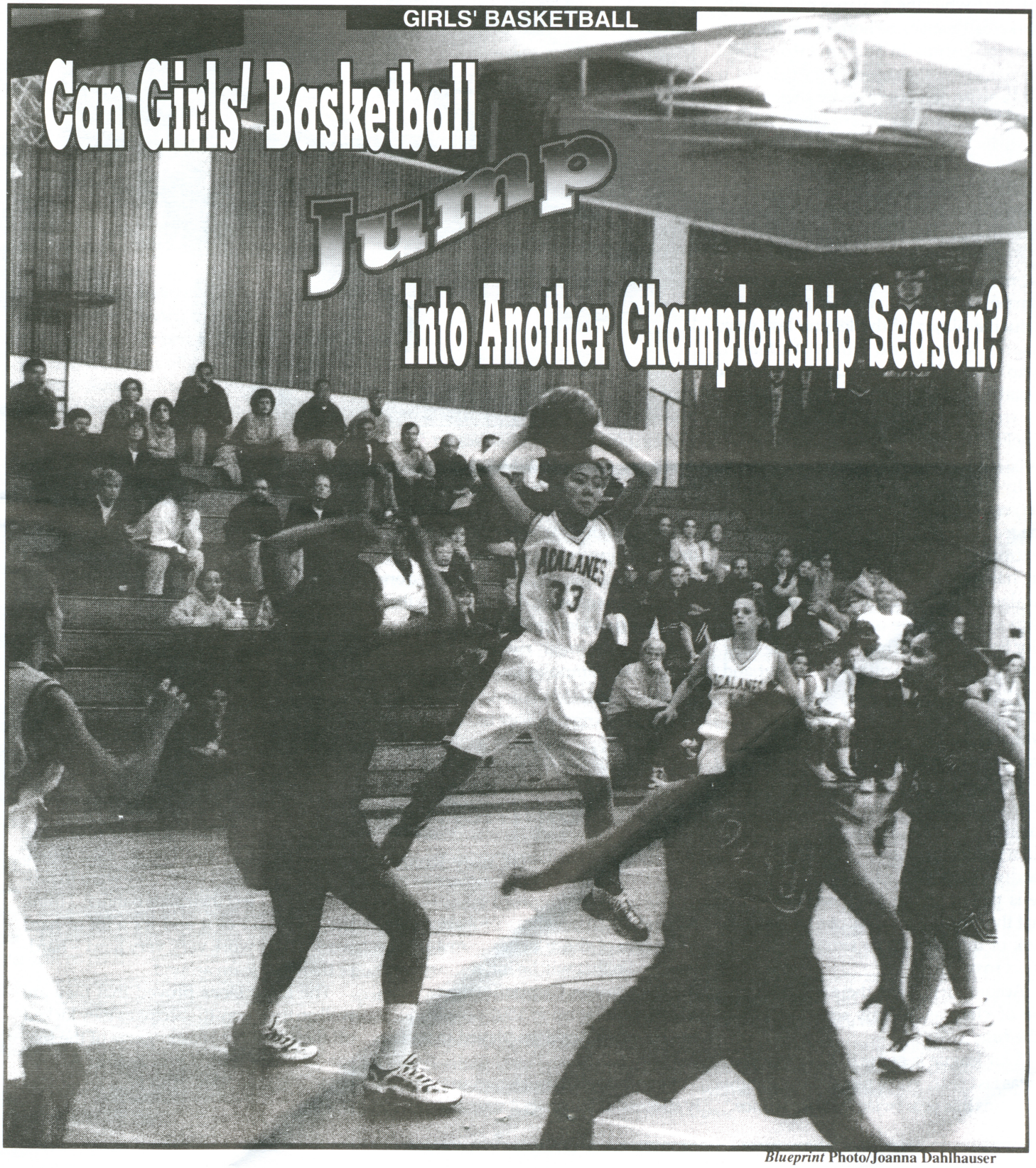
GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Can Girls' Basketball Jump Into Another Championship Season?



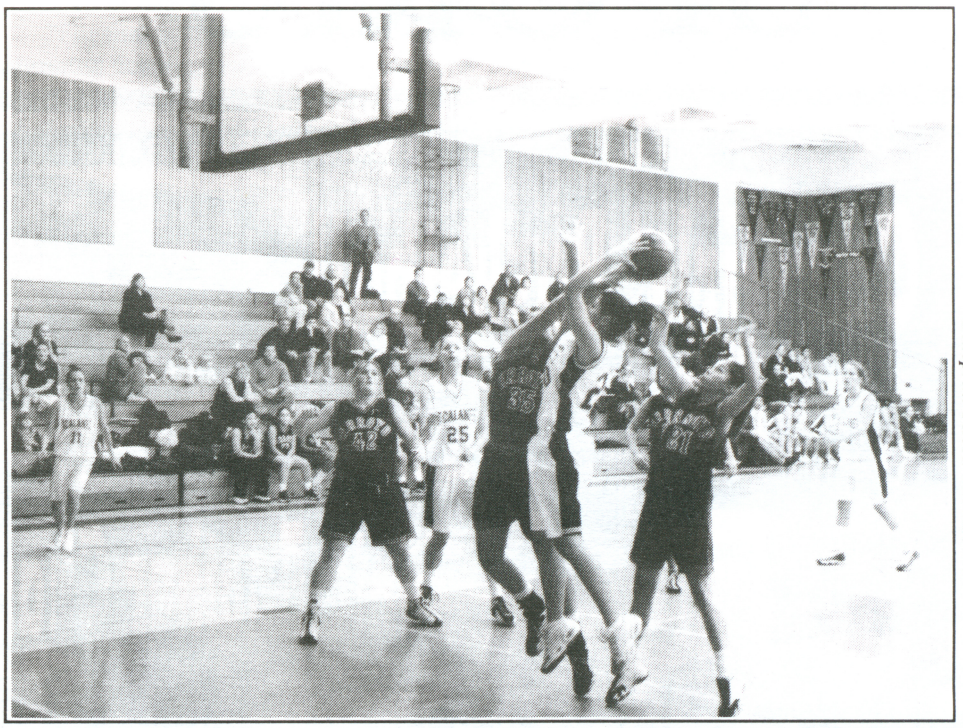
Blueprint Photo/Joanna Dahlhauser

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Pressure Is On for Girl's Basketball Team

By Nathalie Krastev
Staff Writer

Everybody remembers the excitement last year, when the Acalanes girls' varsity basketball team came home from the state championships in Sacramento with a state title. For the students at Acalanes, it was a sense of recognition for their school and pride for their fellow Dons, but for the team members it meant much more.



Blueprint Photo/Thomas Kuo

Senior Lisa Ovadia is attacked by a swarm of defenders from Arroyo while she executes a lay-up during last weeks practice game.

This year, the girls are back--some new some old, but all of them ready to defend their title as state champions.

So the legacy lives on with nine returning members, such as key players seniors Corrie Mizusawa, who was the most valuable player of the league last year, Lauren Murray and Hilary Andersen, who were both first team all-league, Lisa Ovadia, who was second team all-league, as well as juniors Laura Fischer and Chelsea Duffaut who are honorable mentions for the league.

In addition to last year's returning players, there are several newcomers to the team. Senior Kristen Green, a transfer from Idaho who was an all-state player, has established her place on the Acalanes team along with other players such as sophomore Nikki Smith and senior Sara Jacobs. They have made their way up from JV to offer their talent and ability to this highly respected team. Freshman Shannon Wilhelm has also earned her way onto varsity position.

"We have a very good and very deep team," said girl's varsity coach Mr. Casey Rush. He regards his team as very hardworking and adds that he is proud of the progress that the girls are making. As for the outlook of this season, he simply said, " It looks rosy."

According to Rush, there will be a couple of changes in this season's game schedule.

"Our league is going to be better than it was last year. We're playing the toughest teams this year twice instead of once." Other than that, he said, there's not going to be any changes. "We're going to do the same thing as we've always done -- pick them up when they get out of their cars and don't let up."

The team's main rivals this year are going to be Campolindo, Miramonte and Alhambra. "Alhambra's probably going to be one of those better teams in our league. So that will be interesting," said Rush. Of course, Campo always remains a rival, putting up to 1500 people in the stands when Acalanes played them last year.

...they want to protect their state banner...

-Casey Rush

Even though the girls had an extremely successful season last year, they aren't giving up on the idea of improvement. "There's going to be a lot more speed bumps in the road then there were last year. Because we won last year, people are looking at us to repeat it; it's going to make it harder for us," said Rush.

Senior player Erin Viera agrees. "There's a lot more pressure this year because a lot of other teams are after us...And so, we just know that we need to work harder than we did last year," said Viera.

"Their goals are to have fun and enjoy," said Rush. "But I think they want to protect their state banner...I think they're proud of it and it's a lot of hard work. They work very, very hard -- harder than any team around."

The Lady Dons proved that they are well on their way to success as they kicked off their first pre-season game of the season at home with a win against Arroyo on November 30th. The final score was 80 - 35.

X-COUNTRY WRAP-UP

In With The New...Out With The Old

By Keenan Ng
Staff writer

For the Acalanes cross country team, the North Coast Section meet, held on Saturday, Nov. 20, at Hayward High School, was nothing short of spectacular.

Seeded eighth out of fourteen teams coming into the meet, the boy's team none the less came into the race ready to divide and conquer as they ran consistently as a pack with none of their top five runners finishing under 17th place. Led by senior Vijay Sekhon, who finished first for Acalanes with a time of 17:11 (13th place overall, one place short of qualifying for the state meet), the Acalanes team was the first in their division to finish a complete team, which led to their third place finish. With a score of 68, they were 10 points short of going to the state meet, the Meet of Champions, in Clovis, California near Fresno.

"The boys had an unbelievable race. I mean Vijay Sekhon almost made state meet and our fifth runner was only 26 seconds behind him. That's an unbelievable performance," said coach Thomas.

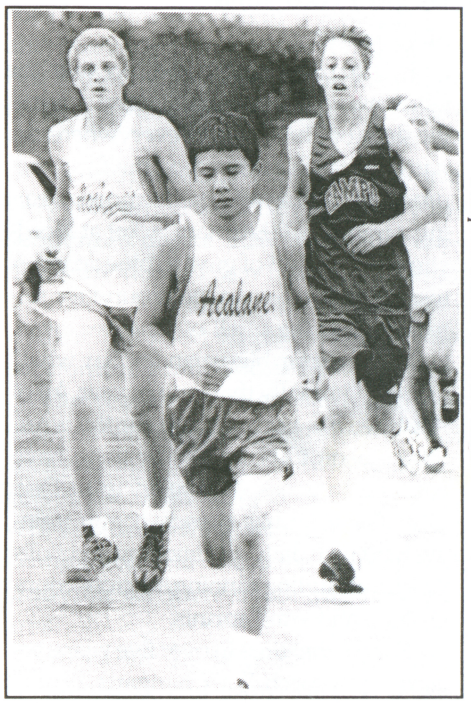
Senior Darryl Wong, who finished 18th overall with a time of 17:37, noted that, "This is the best we have done in the years that I've been here. As far team goes...in terms togetherness, it's by far the best team I have ever seen." Adds head coach Manny Myers, "Redwood, is in the top six teams in the state.. so I would be surprised if when the final team rankings comes out we are not ranked in the top 20 in the state after this meet."

On the girl's side, the meet was just as spectacular. Seeded twelfth out of 14 teams, the girls, who refused their seeding fate, took charge and silenced critics. The team was Led by senior Nikala Prowznik. She finished with a time of 21:40 (28th overall), finished fourth overall with 156 points " The girls did outstandingly. That's all. It's real simple. The course was wet and muddy, sloggy, therefore the real fast kids up front were a little bit equalized and Acalanes girls, the Snodog Harrier women ran a hell of a race," said Myers.

Commenting further on the muddy conditions of the course, Coach Thomas said, "The mud was actually helpful for us because our kids are real strong. It really looks like a sprinter's course but it's frankly a strength runner's course and our kids showed that it was a strength runner's course."

Senior runner, Mary Thomas who finished with a time of 21:57 (third for Acalanes) commented that, "We weren't expecting to do that well, like in terms of team placement. We were all hoping to go out and have a good race but to come in fourth overall was just awesome. That was a shock."

Although only three girls from this North Coast team will be returning this year all is not lost. Freshman Roxy Croze will be a team anchor for next year's girls as she finished second on the team with a time of 21:49.



Blueprint Photo/Will McCosker

Cross country runners (Left-Right) sophomore Brian Gust, freshman Mike Ho, sophomore Stephen McKinley and a Campolindo runner race to the finish line.

On the boy's side, a trio of superb runners will return led by junior Steve Vetek (17:31, 15th overall), sophomore, Royce "Roots" Anderson (17:26, 14th overall), and freshman Alex Shogan (17:31, 17th overall).

Commenting on both the boys and girls performances coach Thomas remarked, "wait till next year."

TENNIS WRAP-UP

Girls' Tennis Finishes an Ace Season

By Hiro Kagiyama
Staff Writer

The fearless gladiators of Acalanes hang their sweat soaked armor and blood spattered titanium rackets away for another year remembering the feeling of battle and the sight of vanquished foes before them, thinking about what could have been, dreaming about what will be.

The Dons tennis season has come to an end placing our warriors at 4th place in TCAL with a respectable record of 8 wins and 6 losses. Also the Dons' ace in the hole, Ashley O'Neil, took home the TCAL championship for the third time while at Acalanes.

The prospects for next year's tennis team look promising even with the loss of Ashley O'Neil because the team has experienced remaining players. Also the team will have new coaching next year, which will hopefully help propel the team forward to a successful season. Former coach Judy Corliss said that it was "...time for me to move on and do other things." and the team seems.

With such drastic changes in store for next year it is hard to say what will happen to the Lady Dons tennis team but whatever happens, the Dons will persevere.

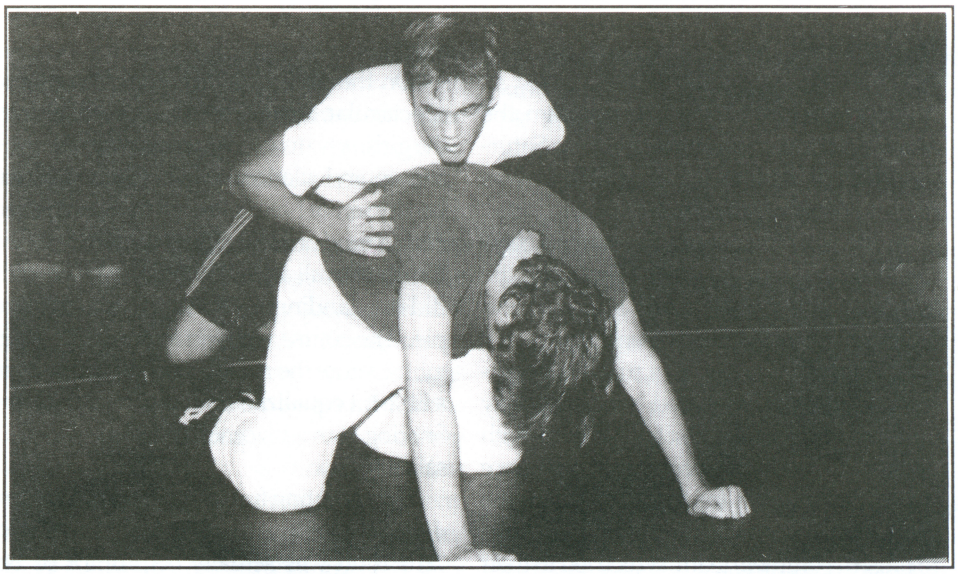
WRESTLING

Dons Hit the Mat for Another Season

By Hiro Kagiyama
Staff Writer

It is hard to ignore the fact that the Christmas season is finally here. I mean the signs of Christmas are everywhere: the nativity scenes in churches, the fluffy figure of Rudolf the red-nosed reindeer wearing a trendy $700 Armani jacket at Nordstrom's, the sight of guys in blue spandex tossing each other on the ground for recreation, and the smell of pine tree...wait, hold up...guys in blue spandex! Say what?

Yes, it is finally that time of year. All of Acalanes has been waiting for the wrestling season to begin. So far there have been no matches scheduled until Dec. 11th. The team has already begun training hard with daily conditioning and skills practice including running the cross-country loop and wind sprints.



Blueprint Photo/Will McCosker

Brett Woodruff practices trying to get Josh Garrett out of the referees position to pin him.

For the first time in over five years, according to coach Jim Changaris, both the varsity and JV teams have the possibility of filling all weight classes this year, giving the Dons an important edge for this year. Yet the team itself consists of only six senior, one junior, over 30 sophomores and 14 freshman exhibiting the obvious fact that the team is relatively quite young.

Changaris feels that this will not pose to be much of an Achilles heel and said, "...I do expect to do a lot better this year compared to last year...I think there is a lot of talent on this team..."

Only time can prove how well this team will stack up against the Titans, Miramonte, and Campolindo. With their current progress its pretty safe to say that the Dons can expect another great wrestling season.

SOCCER

Lady Dons Shoot for Ultimate Goal

Scott Schwertscharf
Staff Writer

The real goal of soccer is not a box at each end of the field, but a championship victory at the end of the season.

With a new coach, a strong core of returning players, and hard pre-season workouts, this year's girls soccer team may have a real shot at accomplishing this final goal.

The push began with the acquisition of a new coach, Tom Ginocchio. Gino, as the girls call him, will fill in the vacancy left by longtime Acalanes coach Hal McArthur. Gino, a coach at St. Mary's College, has previously trained many of the girls on traveling LMSC soccer teams.

Starting in early Nov. the team held daily two-hour workouts. In early preseason play, the team showed prowess, power and potential.

With screaming shots, a commanding presence in midfield, and a dominant defense, the Lady Dons beat both Albany and Berkeley, with a score of 6-0.

The Dons sputtered slightly in their next two games, losing 3-2 to San Ramon, and tying Bishop O'Dowd 1-1. In their league opener on Dec. 6, they picked up the momentum, destroying Alhambra with a score of 5-0, showing that this year's team can put away the opponent.

The Dons lost only four seniors, although among them were TCAL player of the year, Beth Barbera, and goalie Julie Cellini.

Most of last year's starters will be returning this season with even more experience. The majority of the players on the field will be juniors and seniors.

In the Dons third pre-season game, a 3-2 loss to San Ramon, they proved that there are still a few glitches that need to be worked out.

When the Dons faced up against San Ramon High, last year's NCS runner up, they gave up three goals. In showing what might be an Achilles heel, two of them were own-goals; put in the back of the net by our own team.

Luckily the Dons were able to score as many goals on their opponents as they scored on themselves. Senior Elise Dieden put the Dons on the board in the first half with a hard shot from outside the box. Senior Lizzie Block finished Acalanes' scoring with a well placed chip shot off a short corner taken by Jenny Barbera.

Ginocchio said that the important thing is that the girls competed evenly against a very strong opponent.

"It was a good game considering we put two goals in our own net. We knocked it around well," said Ginocchio.

SPORTS HISTORY

The Forgotten Past of Acalanes Athletics

By Myles Rush
Sports Editor PART 1 OF TWO PART STORY.

The forgotten trophy wall of the past lingers ten feet above the carpet and sixty feet wide in the library collecting dust and an occasional glance from a student. Just as easily forgotten is all the names, games, and teams of the past that contributed to the history of our sports program.

Our primitive facilities back in the 1940's looked more like a rerun of Gilligan's Island than a state of the art newly built high school campus, but for the times it was a revolution. It sported a combination football field and track, which was a dirt oval pathway around a scarcely sodded interior with makeshift wooden goal posts. A baseball diamond, where the little league field is today, was without a backstop, bleachers, and a dugout for the team. There was also an indoor gym for the basketball team. There was a large half mud, half water recess in the ground surrounded by stacks of two-by-fours for a fence, and a sign sticking out reading, "no swimming." This was not the pool but a fire pond that was mandatory by the district for safety, which later turned into our old pool, in 1944.

Families relocated to the Contra Costa area after World War II ended in 1945, finding this region a desirable place to live. Since Acalanes was the only school in the area, students attended from Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda. We not only had a swim program but a greater pool of athletes to choose from, making our athletic program more dynamic and successful from the start.

In the first decade at Acalanes the only league sports offered were football in the fall, basketball in the winter, and track, baseball swimming, golf, and tennis in the spring.

Throughout the history of Acalanes the fervor for football has been there through the high and low times, even though there were more lows than highs. There have been three championship teams alternating between shadows of defeat and the glimmers of success.

In 1949, the Acalanes football team lost to Pittsburgh in the championship game under coach Erwin Matson. Both Matson and Charles Eaton split up coaching the various sports between them until Eaton retired at the end of the 60's, and Matson at the beginning of the 70's.

In 1950 head coach Bob Stevens and his team tied the championship with Miramonte. In 1968 led by coach Don Madera, who coached here from 1966-1977, Acalanes knocked down Alhambra 10-7 with a 32 yard field goal with 28 seconds left in the game. The championship came off an undefeated league record, a first in the history of football.

Courtesy PhotoBlueprint Photo/Will

This is a picture taken from the first Aklan in 1941 of the intermural baseball team and their impressive new baseball diamond.

When long time Acalanes teacher Gordon Finn came to Acalanes when Del Valle High was closed, he coached the team from 1979 to 1984. During this time, and about ten years before with coach Don Madera, the football team looked very promising, finishing in the top half of the league with winning records almost every year.

In 1980, after a 7-3 season, the football team led by Finn and line coach Roger McMasters beat Miramonte in a homecoming game for the championship. This was a time in football history that glows brightly in the nostalgia of football fans.

Acalanes tennis started in 1949, and the history of their achievements can best be described as sporadic. In 1950-1952 the team was first in the county. When golf first entered into the program in 1950, Acalanes was first in the county that year. In '51 and '52 the golf team notched a record of 6-1 and was the first in the county both years. Sports like golf and baseball seemed to have had fluctuating success throughout their existence at Acalanes.

Track has been the most consistently successful sport at Acalanes. In 1950 the team had a record of 6-1, and placed first in the county and in the North Coast Section. We were the first in county to win the North Coast track championship under Bob Warren, who has been intimately involved with this school for approximately sixty years now. The team followed that accomplishment the next two years with a perfect 9-0 season, and a 5-1 season, with two more first place finishes in county. Led by Warren, the team won three North Coast championships in the mid-1970's.

"Track has always done well. That is probably the one sport that has been more consistent over the 60 year period than any other sport," said Warren.

Las Lomas, Miramonte, and Campolindo all entered the district in the 1950's. Because of the greater number of schools, the selection of athletes attainable for Acalanes was restricted to only Lafayette and Moraga, slightly hindering the sports program.

One of the most memorable success stories to emerge from the Acalanes sports program was football star Norm Vanbrocklyn. In 1942 Vanbrocklyn graduated and went on to become an All-American quarterback at the University of Oregon, and later went on to play in the NFL for the LA Rams where he earned all-league and all-pro honors and was a critical factor in the team's success.

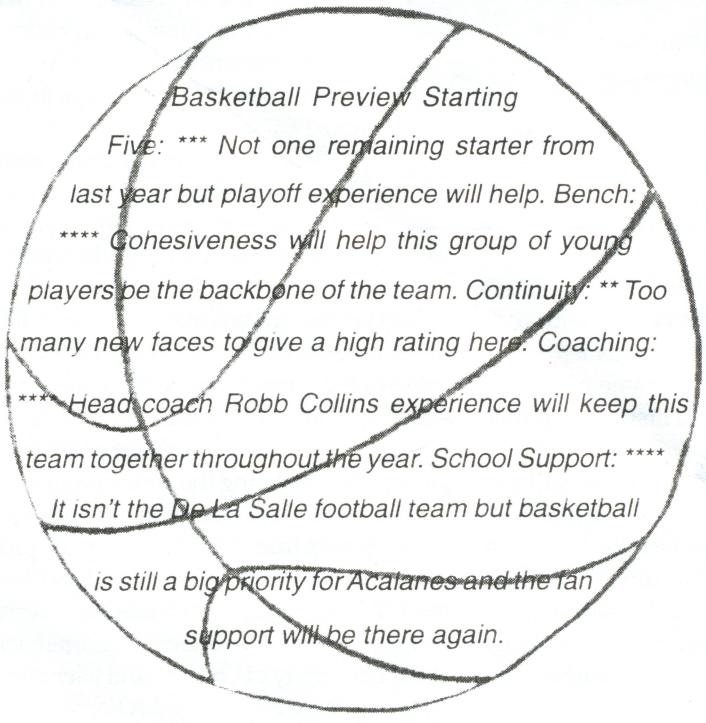
21ST CENTURY SPORTS

Turning The New Century In Sports

By Alex Gallo
Staff Writer

As the turn of the century comes our way, we must reflect back on the changes of one of the biggest contributors in American pastimes: SPORTS. One might think that the rules of the games are the same and the names are merely different. One could look at sports now and notice all the contributions that technology has made like metal tennis racket or titanium golf clubs. One could also notice the sizes of the athletes now. Players are bigger, stronger, and faster. The amount of teams in each sports league has grown faster than ticket prices at a Raider game. Each league has more than doubled with the various expansion teams. Anybody can argue whether these changes are good or bad but there is one major change that has affected sports for the worse. That change is the financial aspect. Money has affected almost every sport in a negative way. In pro football, basketball, and hockey, all players must be under contract to play for a team. This seems to makes sense but it is the structuring of these contracts that is the problem. Every player is constantly getting new contracts at the end of so many years. When a player improves dramatically, they need to have a bigger contract even if the contract was just signed. This results in constant negotiations between team officials and agents. Many times, they can't agree and it results in that player holding out or demanding a trade. In the old days, a franchise player changing teams used to be as rare as a perfect game. Now it's rare to see somebody stay with one team his whole career. The amounts of money in these contracts has increased more than 100 times. It seems like everybody can be a millionaire if they are a free agent today. Players who aren't even the top players in their league earn over 6 million per year. Kevin Brown, a pitcher who hasn't even won a Cy Young Award, is earning 13 million per year. Ryan Leaf, a player signed to be the Charger's quarterback for the next 15 years is a 45 million dollar bench warmer. Golf and Tennis tournaments give prize money of up to a million dollars. In the good ol' days, an athlete wouldn't make much money but it was okay since they were playing a sport to earn it. Now it seems that players are constantly whining about how life for them isn't fair but at least they get paid well. Tell that to the other billions of people working just as many hours earning just enough to get by.

BOYS' BASKETBALL GAMEBALL


Basketball Preview Starting Five: *** Not one remaining starter from last year but playoff experience will help. Bench: **** Cohesiveness will help this group of young players be the backbone of the team. Continuity: ** Too many new faces to give a high rating here. Coaching: **** Head coach Robb Collins experience will keep this team together throughout the year. School Support: **** It isn't the De La Salle football team but basketball is still a big priority for Acalanes and the fan support will be there again.

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The County Connection

ALTERNATIVE SPORTS

Getting Back into the Sport

Once a windsurfer, always a windsurfer

By Kristy Mayer
Staff Writer

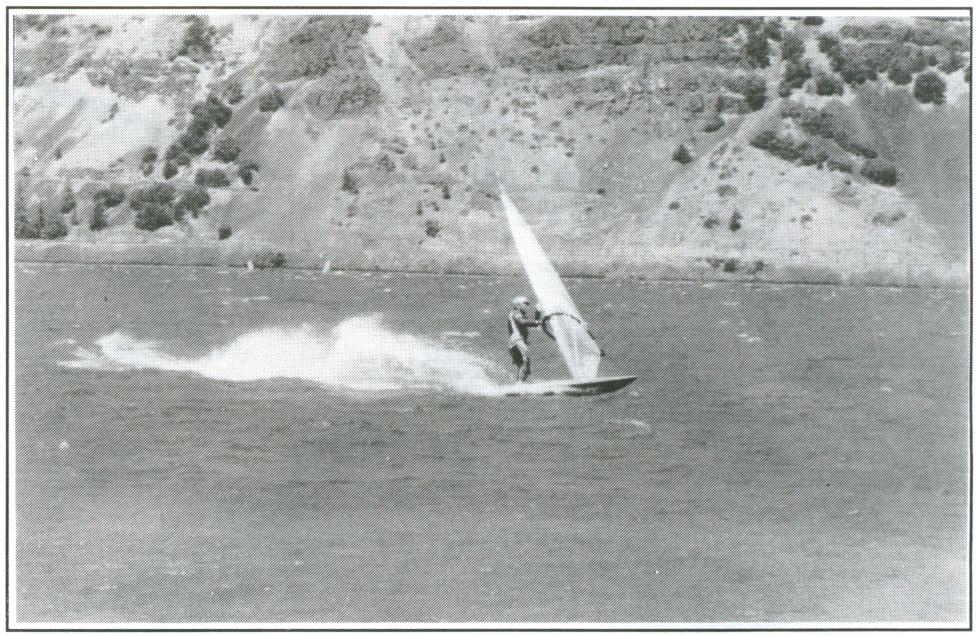
Maui Meyer, former windsurfer and owner of 6th Street Bistro and Loft in Hood River, OR, was once at the top of his game as a professional windsurfer, and has recently resumed windsurfing after a hiatus of several years.

Meyer started windsurfing after he broke his leg in an automobile accident. Windsurfing was reputed to be a sport that would help him rehabilitate his leg. What was then just physical therapy quickly developed into an activity for which Meyer had an innate talent and passion.

A counselor from his junior year of high school was the driving force behind Meyer's decision to make what was his hobby into a career. His counselor told him his grades were not that great, and he probably would not get into a good college. This knowledge coupled with a feeling that no one understood what he wanted to do with his life convinced Meyer to skip college and become a professional windsurfer.

He began touring the world for ten months out of the year, competing in the World Circuit, a well-known windsurfing tour. He quickly proved himself to his fellow windsurfers and the rest of the world by achieving the honor of being among the top ten competitors in overall windsurfing, among the top five in slalom racing, and among the top four in wave riding by the age of twenty.

Meyer describes the feeling of being out of the water in the middle of a race as, "very, very intense." He also compares it to going to work. "The water was like my office. I spent thousands and thousands of hours training to be out on that race course, and so when I'm out on the race course, it feels like I'm just doing my job," said Meyer.



Courtesy Photo

Maui Meyer, a former top five slalom racer, executes a killer jibe close to shore on his windsurfing board.

Even though he could have pursued an amazing career in windsurfing complete with an early retirement, Meyer gave it all up when he was offered the chance to go to Cornell University. "One doesn't turn down a chance to do something like that," he adds with a smile.

Although he could have gone back to windsurfing after college, Meyer chose not to. His reason behind this decision was that it is very hard to return to something, especially a sport, once one has taken substantial time off.

"I left at the very top of my windsurfing career...When you leave a sport...and you come back, it's very difficult to be successful again," said Meyer.

After his decision against windsurfing professionally, Meyer took several years off from all aspects of windsurfing. He has recently begun to windsurf as a hobby again, simply sailing for the thrill of the sport.

"I've...just gotten back into it in the last couple of years...It's like riding a bicycle: you never really forget...It's a great sport. I never realized how much I missed it," said Meyer

Now that he's windsurfing without all the pressures of competition, Meyer feels the entire feeling of being out on the water has changed.

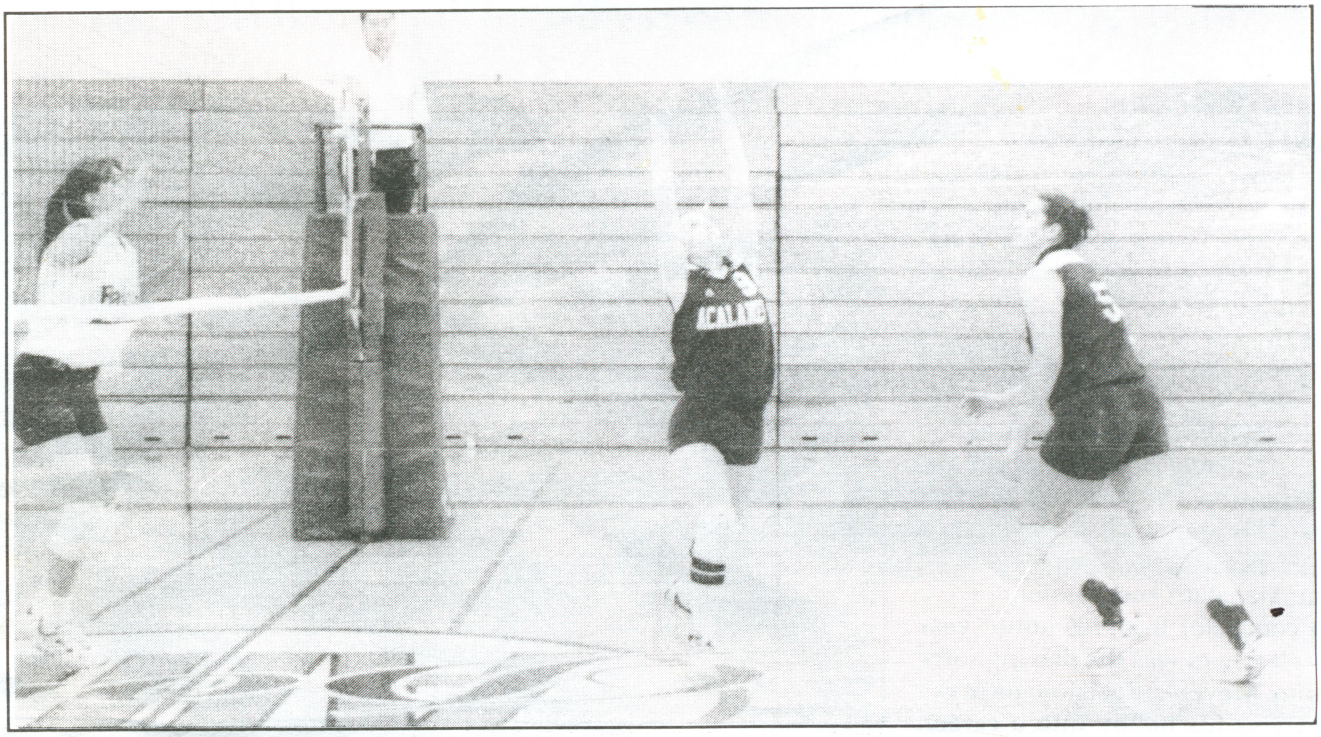
"I...enjoy it much more. I haven't been sailing in so many years that it's a new feeling, but it's a very old feeling (as well)," said Meyer

Meyer's original pursuit of windsurfing has taken him around the world, enabling him to see and experience things few have had the opportunity to do. These experiences included being in Europe when Chernobyl blew up, and stepping out of the Frankfurt air terminal twenty minutes before it was bombed by Arab terrorists.

Despite his incredible success and experiences, Meyer remains a modest man, saying his greatest accomplishment simply was, "Marrying my wife."

Athletes of the Issue

Lindsay Cimina



Blueprint Photo/ Thomas Kuo

Senior Lindsay Cimina has started every game this season as a dependable, consistent athlete for the girls' volleyball team. In Cimina's third year on varsity, she has compiled over 175 kills and over 75 blocks to propel the team to North Coast and a tie in league with Las Lomas. Her exceptional play earned her the team's MVP award and she is second team all-league. Cimina is also the team captain, and at the Davis tournament she dominated the final match to push her and her team to first place in the silver division. "She's more of a silent leader. She leads by example. She is aggressive. She is strong and determined," said volleyball coach Dionna Ward. Because of her continued contribution to the volleyball team this past season Lindsay Cimina has earned this issue's Female Athlete of the Issue.

Vijay Sekhon

Blueprint Photo/Will McCosker

At the beginning of the season, senior Vijay Sekhon was expected to play football like the year before. At the end of the season, he was the top finisher on the cross country team in the meet of champions division three race and 13th overall. He also helped his team attain third place. "Vijay's strong desire to win brought our team to a whole new level of intensity and competitiveness," said junior teammate Steve Vetek. In the TCAL playoffs, Sekhon took a first class place of sixth with a time of 17:05. The Contra Costa Times predicted Sekhon to go to state in a preview of the Meet of Champions, and Sekhon only missed the opportunity by one placing. He had not trained prior to the season as the rest of the team or as the rest of the league. This didn't affect his attitude because in his first cross country race he ran varsity, feeling he could run at that level of competition. Sekhon came on the team and helped out substantially this season. For this, he is this issue's Male Athlete of the Issue.